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Selly Oak Colleges' Publications, No. 9.

PROPHECY AND ESCHATOLOGY

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CENTRAL COUNCIL PUBLICATIONS.

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PROPHECY AND ESCHATOLOGY

BY

NATHANIEL MICKLEM, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF OLD TESTAMENT LITERATURE AND THEOLOGY AT THE SELLY OAK COLLEGES, BIRMINGHAM

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LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C.1

First published in 1926

Printed in Great Britain by
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, LONDON AND WOKING
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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is fundamentally simple. I have two convictions, which I have here attempted to explain and, so far as I could, to justify. The first is that much of the current exegesis of prophecy is based on psychological notions which have been superseded by scientific investigators of the working of the mind, particularly of the poetic mind. The second is that the great prophets, in spite of various differences, stood for a common religious position which was inwardly self-consistent and dealing with realities.

I am not the devotee of any particular psychological school, nor am I a psychologist in any technical sense, but any intelligent reader of modern psychological investigation can see that much new light is being thrown upon such problems as the use and significance of symbolism in poetry, in painting and in dreams. I believe that the symbolism of the prophets has been widely and seriously misunderstood, and further that the modern " ecstatic " theory of prophecy is in some aspects very misleading. These studies cease with Ezekiel. I hope that someone more competent in psychology may be persuaded to write a study of the apocalyptists from this point of view.

The second part of my task has seemed to me more difficult, as perhaps it is more important. It is a very great experience for any man to turn aside from more general theological and philosophical studies to

discover the great Hebrew prophets; these men make an almost overwhelming impression upon the reader who comes afresh to them. I have profited, more perhaps than these pages show, from the devoted and most learned works of modern Old Testament scholars; indeed, I should not be surprised to learn that no single suggestion that I have made, from the wisest to the most foolish, is an original notion of my own. But I confess that the commentators leave me in much mystification; their particular comments often strike me as wise and just, but I cannot for the most part derive from them pictures of the individual prophets which seem to me consistent and spiritually convincing; or if some part of the prophetic period seems consistent, I cannot fit it into the framework of the spiritual history of Israel as a whole.

It does not seem to me in the least degree likely that all my arguments will stand the test of searching criticism, and it does not seem to me a light matter if in any important aspect I should mislead the less critical reader, but I have thought it right to do what I could; and I really believe that this book is more diffidently written than the style of it might suggest. I am not unaware of many technical disqualifications for the task that I have undertaken, but the most serious deficiency seems to me to be religious. It is often only by a great and painful stretch of the imagination that we are able to conceive that overmastering sense of the presence, the power and the glory of the living God which was as the air which the prophets breathed. It does not appear to me that any interpreter has much hope of success in his task unless he himself be aware of God somewhat after the fashion of the Hebrew prophets.

Some of the arguments in this book are of necessity somewhat technical, but I have so far as possible attempted to write the book in such a way that it may be quite intelligible in its main contentions to those who have little or no knowledge of the Hebrew language. Again and again in preparing these chapters I have desired and missed the never refused help and counsel of my friend and teacher, George Buchanan Gray. If I had not always been able to follow his exegesis, or if I had felt bound to express an opinion where he would have bidden me suspend judgment for a time, I could have relied always on his spiritual perception no less than upon his learning and ripe wisdom. I hope there may be many traces of his influence in my book. I owe very grateful thanks to Dr. J. P. Naish, of Mansfield College, for a careful revision of my manuscript, but he must not be regarded as agreeing with my opinions.

N. M.

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Prophecy and Eschatology

CHAPTER I

PSYCHOLOGY AND PROPHECY

A MODERN scholar [1] has given a vivid picture of the prophetic inspiration. "We can now," he writes, "call before our minds a picture of the prophet's activity in public. He might be mingling with the crowd, sometimes on ordinary days, sometimes on special occasions. Suddenly something would happen to him. His eye would become fixed, strange convulsions would seize upon his limbs, the form of his speech would change. Men would recognize that the Spirit had fallen upon him. The fit would pass, and he would tell to those who stood around the things which he had seen and heard. There might have been symbolic action, and this he would explain with a clear memory of all that had befallen him and of all that he had done under the stress of the ecstasy. Such manifestations were common, and there were many who were subject to them." By other scholars the accuracy of this picture is strenuously denied.

[1] Dr. T. H. Robinson in *Prophecy and the Prophets*, p. 50. Duckworth, 1923. Cf. Gunkel, *Propheten*, pp. 111 f. Göttingen, 1917. See also Gunkel's excursus on "Die geheimen Erfahrungen der Propheten," esp. pp. xxiii f. in *Die Schriften des alten Testaments*, 2 Abteilung, 2 Band.

Buttenwieser,[1] indeed, maintains that "the inspiration of the great literary prophets has nothing in common with the ecstasy of the prophets of the older type . . . nor are the visions of the literary prophets in any way akin to the ecstatic visions and dreams of the diviner."

The importance of this controversy can be overestimated; the truth of any oracle or ordinary statement depends not upon the psychological conditions under which it is first uttered, but upon its correspondence with facts. No sensible man would deny a statement on the ground that it was or was not given by a speaker in a frenzy. For the following reasons, however, it is worth while to look somewhat more closer into this matter: (*a*). It is certainly desirable that we should so far as possible obtain an accurate picture of the ministry of these outstanding figures in the history of religion; (*b*). if it could be shown that the great prophets were men whose nervous and psychical constitution was such that we should call them not merely highly strung, but neurotic to the point of morbidness, it would rightly raise a presumption in the minds of healthy men that, valuable as may be the glimpses and intuitions of these prophetic spirits, we must not look to them for a quiet and balanced outlook, nor for a religious position which we might desire to be normal amongst men; genius tends to be unbalanced and not dependable; (*c*). if prophecy is inevitably associated with a neurotic constitution, what of the contention that the preaching ministry of the Christian Church is or should be in the line of the prophetic office? Must we expect those who speak to us in the name of God to be men of

[1] *The Prophets of Israel*, pp. 138 f. The Macmillan Co., 1914.

a somewhat unbalanced psychical disposition ? (*d*)-there is a large number of passages in the prophetic writings where, as we shall see, our interpretation of their meaning is closely bound up with our conception of the nature and operation of the prophetic inspiration. Indeed, the chief reason for beginning these studies with an inquiry into the psychological conditions of prophecy is that much of our exegesis is qualified by our answer to this problem.

Very familiar is Michael Angelo's portrait of Jeremiah seated with bowed head, his forehead high and broad, furrowed and lined by suffering and meditation, massive and calm, his body strong and firm—the last man to suffer from a nervous breakdown. How different would be a portrait based on Dr. Robinson's description cited above! We should have, I suppose, a lean man with nervous, twitching fingers, with thin, mobile lips, with deep, wild eyes and tousled hair. It would never do to reject Dr. Robinson's portrait, as he gives it us, simply because we prefer the Jeremiah of Michael Angelo [1]; all the evidence must be impartially considered, and it will appear from the sequel that, while I think that Robinson, Hölscher and others give an exaggerated estimate of the ecstatic element in prophecy, I do not regard their picture as *wholly* misleading.

Before we turn to an examination of the text, certain general considerations are in place. The psychology of the prophets is a part of the general subject of inspiration, and it is greatly to be desired that some psychologist acquainted with the

[1] That Dr. Robinson's description is meant to cover the case of Jeremiah appears from p. 121 op cit.; see also the *Expositor* for March 1921.

subject as a whole would equip himself to treat of inspiration with special reference to Hebrew prophecy.[1]

In the first place, it is idle to deny the real psychological connection emphasized by Robinson, Hölscher and others between the early *nebi'im* in Israel and the great literary prophets. To the modern psychologist the Dervish at the *zikr*, the Shaman at his séance, the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, the great prophets of Israel, the demoniacs of New Testament times, the medium in trance, the script of the automatic writer, the imaginative drawings of the artist, the dreams of the neurotic, the creations of the poet and novelist alike illustrate the operation of the subject's unconscious mind.[2] The manifestations of inspiration may be as varied in form and value as, for instance, the manifestations of ambition, but they are all alike exhibitions of the same human faculty. Buttenwieser's contention that, "while the inspiration of the great prophets has nothing in common with the ecstasy of the prophets of the older type,"[3] yet it is parallel to the *furor poeticus*,[4] is quite unphilosophical. It is possible that doctors, by the study of the dreams and hallucinations of neurotics, may be able to throw some light upon the mysterious psychological "mechanism" of all creative work, but it is a question whether, with Robinson and Hölscher, we should approach the psychological study of the great prophets from the side of primitive mantism

[1] Since this was written, Major Povah's *New Psychology and the Hebrew Prophets* has appeared, an interesting and suggestive work which goes some way to meet the need.

[2] See, for example, E. R. Micklem, *Miracles and the New Psychology*, pp. 50–80; Oskar Pfister, *Ein neuer Zugang zum alten Evangelien*, Chap. i; also his *Expressionism and Psychology*.

[3] Op. cit., p. 138. [4] Ib., p. 156.

and ecstasy or from the study of the *furor poeticus* and the experiences of poets and artists in their creative moments.

But religious readers may be disposed to demur to this general position on the ground that there must be some fundamental distinction between those cases where God himself speaks through the prophet or preacher, and those where a novelist or medium, a Pythoness or dreamer, gives utterance simply to the chaotic imaginations of his or her unconscious mind. This is up to a point a fair and legitimate objection, but however great the difference in *value* between the word inspired by God and the chance eruption of the human unconscious mind, the psychological "mechanism" of inspiration or creative utterance seems in both cases the same. That God speaks to man's heart, we are inwardly assured, but *how* God speaks and *how* man hears is a mystery we can never fully explain. But if God can speak to our hearts in normal waking consciousness, there seems no philosophical reason why it should be so difficult to think that he may speak to us, as all the Scriptures testify, also through dreams. If not all dreams are God-inspired, yet some may be.

To the psychologist there is no essential or important difference between dreams that come in sleep at night, those that come when we are half-asleep and half-awake, and those we call day-dreams; moreover, apart from merely physical concomitants, there is no difference to the psychologist between ordinary dreams and extraordinary visions which come in a state of trance. The problem of the divine inspiration of the prophets is not affected by the inquiry into the psychology of prophecy with which we are at the

moment concerned. The distinction between true and false prophecy will concern us later.

To return to the prophetic ecstasy or frenzy, it is highly important that we should define terms, for it is often exceedingly difficult to know exactly in what sense such terms as ecstasy are being used. All imaginative, all creative work, all meditation and deep thought involve a condition which the psychologists call "secondary"; the religious writers often call it a state of "recollection"; the mind is withdrawn into itself. This, for instance, is why we cannot get on with our work while the barrel-organ is being played outside, unless, indeed, we have such powers of concentration that we do not hear, or at least do not notice, the music. Everyone knows that concentration is necessary for all good work. There are indefinitely many gradations between a state of concentration or a brown study on the one side and a deep trance wherein consciousness is lost on the other; but there is a fairly clear distinction between conditions of deep reverie and those trance-conditions or dream-conditions where the subject has little or no control either over the actions of his body or the movements of his thought. By derivation the term "ecstasy" refers to a state in which the soul was supposed to leave the body; the soul travels afar, and perhaps the body is controlled by a different soul or spirit. Beliefs of this kind are widespread among primitive peoples everywhere. I shall confine the term "ecstasy" only to those states where there appears to be almost total loss of control on the part of the subject; if, for instance, the great prophets were wont to dance or stamp or wave their arms or gash themselves like the Baal prophets on Mount Carmel, I should say they

were in ecstasy; or again if consciously or unconsciously they uttered words which were as little their own as the writings in the automatic script are the conscious thoughts of the writers, or the utterances of the planchette are the conscious words of the assessors, I should again say that the prophets were speaking in a condition of ecstasy. If, on the other hand, the prophets consciously performed symbolical actions in order to convey their message, or if their words, uttered perhaps under stress of great tension and emotion, should be consciously delivered, and be so part of their own conscious thought and reflection as to be part of themselves, or if again their visions and auditions should prove to be not essentially dissimilar from experiences such as may befall persons of ordinary temperament in full possession of their senses, I think we should be wise to avoid the term "ecstasy," and speak of absorption or recollection or some such measured word.

For our understanding of the prophets it is obviously better that we should move out from the known to the unknown; and inasmuch as the prophets were poets and profound thinkers, it is *a priori* likely that we shall derive greater illumination upon their inspiration from the described experiences of the poets and artists nearer to our own times than from the crude rites of barbarous peoples. The task of carefully scrutinizing the texts still lies before us, but it may be said at this stage that it seems to me definitely misleading when scholars dealing with the psychology of prophecy point us to ecstatic and orgiastic rites in Syria or to the phenomena of Shamanism generally, while they pay little or no attention to the psychical experiences of civilized men who in outlook and

spiritual culture stand far nearer to the prophets than do these primitives.

Not forgetting, then, the primitive ecstatic experiences of persons believed to be inspired which were familiar in Palestine in the period of the great prophets as both before and after, let us consider what light may be thrown upon the prophetic experience from more modern sources.

Many terms express the prophetic inspiration, "I saw," "I heard," "the hand of Adonai came upon me." Vision, audition, control are the modern psychological words which are somewhat parallel. Presumably we are all subject to minor and passing hallucinations; we are deceived by a flaw in the window-pane into thinking it is raining when it is not; we mistake a shadow on the wall for a person hiding in the corner; we think we hear our name called, and almost instantly we recognize that it was but some street or farmyard cry; we think for a moment that we see someone in the street who is long since dead; we have been misled by some chance resemblance. Sir Walter Scott, on hearing of Byron's death, "suddenly saw his friend's image before him. Astonished at the natural appearance of the clothes he approached the phantom and discovered that it was an illusion, and that the clothes of the figure consisted of folds of a curtain." [1] Towards the close of the thirteenth book of the "Prelude" Wordsworth says:

> . . . To a hope
> Not less ambitious once among the wilds
> Of Sarum's Plain, my youthful spirit was raised;
> There, as I ranged at will the pastoral downs

[1] E. Parish, *Hallucination and Illusions*, pp. 78 and 81, quoted Prescott, *The Poetic Mind*, p. 19. Macmillan Co., 1922.

Trackless and smooth, or paced the bare white roads
Lengthening in solitude their dreary line,
Time with his retinue of ages fled
Backwards, nor checked his flight until I saw
Our dim ancestral Past in vision clear;
Saw multitudes of men, and, here and there,
A single Briton clothed in wolf-skin vest,
With shield and stone axe stride across the wold;
The voice of spears was heard, the rattling spear
Shaken by arms of mighty bone, in strength,
Long mouldered, of barbaric majesty.
I called on Darkness—but before the word
Was uttered, midnight darkness seemed to take
All objects from my sight; and lo! again
The Desert visible by dismal flames;
It is the sacrificial altar, fed
With living men—how deep the groans! the voice
Of those that crowd the giant wicker thrills
The monumental hillocks, and the pomp
Is for both worlds, the living and the dead.
At other moments—(for through that wide waste
Three summer days I roamed) where'er the Plain
Was figured o'er with circles, lines, or mounds,
That yet survive, a work, as some divine,
Shaped by the Druids, so to represent
Their knowledge of the heavens, and image forth
The constellations—greatly was I charmed
Into a waking dream, a reverie
That, with believing eyes, where'er I turned,
Beheld long-bearded teachers, with white wands
Uplifted, pointing to the starry sky,
Alternately, and plain below, while breath
Of music swayed their motions, and the waste
Rejoiced with them and me in those sweet sounds.

Here the poet has an experience involving vision and audition and hallucinatory elements; the experience apparently lasts through three days. The days were spent, as it would appear, in walking over

Salisbury Plain; there is no reason to think that the poet refused his meals during that period, or that he failed to return home at night and converse reasonably with his companions, and fall asleep in the normal manner. It is plain that Wordsworth did not spend the three days and three nights in a trance, such, for instance, as that of the medium or sleep-walker. Being in his sober senses, though doubtless highly abstracted and deeply withdrawn into himself, he saw visions and heard voices, and the objects that met his eye on the plain were the occasion of various and impressive hallucinations. We have to consider whether we get more light upon the psychology of prophecy by considering the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel or the poet Wordsworth on Salisbury Plain.

With reference to the call of Jeremiah, Dr. Skinner says: "We are reminded of that 'consciousness of a presence' which Professor James has described as an 'imperfectly developed hallucination,' and of which he cites examples as occurring to persons of sound intellect in full possession of their waking senses."[1] It is a familiar story that Dickens, when composing the "Pickwick Papers" would burst out laughing at the things which he *heard* Sam Weller say. Again, "Speaking of his 'Minervy Anns,' Joel Chandler Harris says: 'I have been intensely absorbed in the series, more so than in anything I have ever written. There have been moments when I could hear her voice as plainly as I now hear the youngsters talking in the sitting-room.'"[2] Significant also in

[1] *Prophecy and Religion*, p. 26. Cambridge University Press, 1922.

[2] Quoted Prescott, op. cit., pp. 188 f.

this connection is Mozart's account of the method or mechanism of his composition :

> Once I catch my air, another soon comes to join the first, according to the requirements of the whole composition, counterpoint, the play of the various instruments, etc., and all these morsels combine to form the whole. Then my mind kindles, if nothing happens to interrupt me. The work grows—I keep hearing it, and bring it out more and more clearly, and the composition ends by being completely executed in my mind, however long it may be. I then comprehend the whole at one glance, as I should a beautiful picture or a handsome boy ; and my imagination makes me hear it, not in its parts successively as I shall come to hear it later, but as a whole in its *ensemble*. What delight it is for me ! It all, the inspiration and the execution, takes place in me as if it were a beautiful and very distinct dream. What I get in this way I do not forget any more easily, and this is perhaps the most precious gift our Lord has given me. If I, then, sit down to write, I have only to draw from this store in my mind what has already accumulated there in the way I have described. Moreover, the whole is not difficult to fix on paper. The whole is perfectly determined, and rarely ever does my score differ much from what I have had already in my mind." [1]

It is a matter for the psychologists to determine, if they can, how the new creation rises from the unconscious into the conscious mind of man, and for the philosophers to determine, if they can, what is the source and spring of these creative acts. No one doubts that Mozart did write *Don Juan* and Dickens the "Pickwick Papers," however inexplicable their work appears. I take it for probable that scores of preachers would assert that something similar has been their own occasional experience in the composition of their more

[1] Quoted Prescott, op. cit., pp. 42 f. The elaborate nature of Ezek. xl–xlviii therefore affords no proof that these chapters were not given in *vision*, but see infra pp. 215 ff.

inspired sermons. *A priori* we should expect to find that the "fine frenzy" of Amos or Isaiah was more akin to that of Wordsworth than to that of a dervish at Mohurran.

We shall deal in a moment with the detailed contention in regard to the prophets that they were ecstatics in the sense defined above, but two general considerations may here be weighed. In the first place it is maintained that only the superstitious awe connected with madness and maniac symptoms could have preserved the lives of the prophets of woe from the fury of the mob or of the government officials.[1] There is no doubt much force in this plea, but it should be remembered that we have no means of knowing what degree of frenzy would be required in that century before a man would be recognized as speaking under the inspiration of Adonai. Let us admit for the moment that only some unusual psychic experiences were taken to authenticate a prophet; we still desire to know whether such experiences must take the form of mania or perhaps of the trance of deep absorption, and more particularly we desire to know whether these experiences were the normal concomitants of the prophetic inspiration.

Secondly, stress is laid upon the linguistic argument: "The fact is that *Nabi'* meant an ecstatic, and it is difficult to see how the term could have been applied to people who had nothing of the ecstatic about them."[2] Again: "There is no evidence to show that the reflexive forms of the root *NB'* ever meant anything but 'ecstatic frenzy'—at least, before the time of Amos."[3] I do not wish to be thought to be

[1] Robinson, *Prophecy and the Prophets*, p. 45.
[2] T. H. Robinson in *Expositor*, March 1921, pp. 224 f.
[3] Ib., p. 224.

denying visionary and hallucinatory elements in the experience of Amos; we shall come to that later, but there is no doubt that the general effect and impression of Dr. Robinson's language is to give us a picture of the great prophets outwardly little distinguished from the primitive *nebi'im* of the days of Saul. This is further shown by his translation of Amos vii. 16: "You tell me not to dribble prophecies over Israel and Isaac."[1] What, then, is the force of the linguistic argument? We may freely admit that the reflexive forms of the root *NB'* prior to Amos are generally, if not exclusively, used in the extant texts of ecstatic prophecy; the most probable exception is the case of Micaiah ben Imlah, to which we shall return in another connection. But even if in every case the verb is used of ecstatic prophecy, the argument still moves in a circle. Dr. Robinson desires to prove that Amos was, so far as outward appearances go, a prophet after the manner of the ecstatic prophets; he desires to prove, that is, that, so far as externals are concerned, the term *nabi'* is applied to him in the same sense as to earlier prophets; his argument is that the verb to "prophesy" is applied to him as to his predecessors, therefore it must be used of him in precisely the same sense as of them. But this is precisely the question under dispute!

Now it is clear that the meaning of the verb must be correlative with that of the noun. In this connection it is noticeable that in E Abraham is called a prophet,[2] and Gunkel maintains that both E and J[b] regard him as such.[3] Again: Gunkel

[1] *The Book of Amos translated into Colloquial English*, T. H. Robinson. National Adult School Union, 1923.
[2] Gen. xx. 7. [3] *Genesis*, p. 184.

points out[1] that in E's conception of the converse between God and the patriarchs the ecstatic element is entirely absent. The date of E is uncertain, but the patriarchal narratives of J and E are usually supposed to give us prophetic ideas from the period just before or at latest a little after Amos. In Deut. xiii. 1 ff. nothing is said or necessarily implied of the prophet's ecstasy; in Deut. xxxiv. 10 Moses is called a prophet in a passage which suggests that ecstasy was the mark of lower prophecy rather than necessarily connected with the idea of prophecy. It is certain that later the verb *NB'* does not involve ecstasy, else would the musical services of the later Temple have been the reverse of edifying.[2] In view, then, of the ideas and thoughts of communion between God and His servants which underlie the patriarchal narratives, it seems to me hazardous to assert that ecstasy, as defined above and apparently assumed by Robinson, Hölscher and others, was essential to the notion of prophecy. But it should be plain that the denial of ecstasy in the sense defined above does not involve the denial of hallucination, abstraction or even of trance, of which there is, as we shall find, limited but undeniable evidence.

We pass to a different matter, which may prove of very great importance for the understanding of prophecy. The "winged words" of poetry are distinguished from the pedestrian diction of descriptive prose by rhythm and still more by symbolism. Great imaginative writing, whether in verse or prose, is packed with metaphor and simile; the artist sees correspondences, similarities, and identities which are hidden

[1] *Genesis*, p. 236. [2] 1 Chron. xxv. 3.

from the more prosaic mind, and his language is largely the heaping up of imagery. The yokel may tell his love that she is a sweet-looking lass, but the poet says :

> My love is like a red, red rose.

Here the image is introduced by the word " like," but constantly in imaginative writing we find instead of a comparison an identification. Thus Rossetti :

> For he is rose of Sharon, he
> Most sweet in purity.

Here the meaning is perfectly plain, but it would take many dull lines of prose to reduce these few pregnant words to their various factors and state without imagery their exact meaning. In many cases a poet does not merely mean to compare one thing with another, but to state that there is a real or mystical identity between them. Francis Thompson begins his " Orient Ode " :

> Lo, in the sanctuaried East,
> Day, a dedicated priest
> In all his robes pontifical exprest,
> Lifteth slowly, lifteth sweetly,
> From out its Orient tabernacle drawn,
> Yon orbèd sacrament confest,
> Which sprinkles benediction through the dawn ;
> And when the grave procession's ceased,
> The earth with due illustrious rite
> Blessed—e'er the frail fingers featly
> Of twilight, violet-cassocked acolyte,
> His sacerdotal stoles unvest—
> Sets, for high close of the mysterious feast,
> The sun in august exposition meetly
> Within the flaming monstrance of the West.

Francis Thompson was a poet, and we cannot accuse him of the banality of having compared a sunrise to a ceremony in church ; he clearly means and supposes that there is a real identity between man's worship and Nature's, and that the sunrise and the earthly ceremony explain one another and bear the same essential meaning ; the real meaning of the sunrise can only be expressed through the familiar sacramental language. Thompson would not deny what the physicist might assert of the sunrise, but he would claim to see farther into the truth and meaning of it all than could the scientist. But his words are to be taken symbolically or mystically, and not literally. In the interpretation of the prophets, and yet more the apocalyptists, it is of vital importance that we know how to distinguish symbolism from literal statement. We may quote further from Thompson's " Ode to the Setting Sun " :

> . . . Is it not so, O thou down-stricken Day,
> That draw'st thy splendours round thee in thy fall ?
> High was thine Eastern pomp inaugural ;
> But thou dost set in statelier pageantry
> Lauded with tumults of a firmament :
> Thy visible music-blasts make deaf the sky,
> Thy cymbals clang to fire the Occident,
> Thou dost thy dying so triumphally :
> I *see* the crimson blaring of thy shawms !

Here we see language and imagery stretched nearly to breaking-point to describe the sunset ; but indeed we seem to have here more than a description of the sunset : we have the description of an emotional experience, partly audition, partly hallucinatory vision, and yet neither exactly seeing nor hearing. Taken literally, the passage could only be the work of a lunatic.

Once more in the same poem the setting sun is thus addressed :

> Thou art of Him a type memorial.
> Like Him thou hang'st in dreadful pomp of blood
> Upon thy western rood ;
> And His stained brow did stain like thine to-night,
> Yet lift once more Its light,
> And, risen, again departed from our ball,
> But when it set on earth arose in heaven.

Here again it should be needless to point out that Thompson did not suppose the western sky to be suffused with the blood of the crucified sun. But it is clear that from the contemplation of the sunset the poet received a religious vision which may have been accompanied by hallucinatory elements.

With reference to the exaltation of Mount Zion in the coming age,[1] Gressmann remarks that either these passages are all to be taken allegorically (for which, he says, there is not the slightest evidence), or they are all to be taken literally, so far as they bear any intelligible sense.[2] For the understanding and interpretation of imaginative literature it must already be evident that this dilemma is too facile. The symbolism of poetry is not to be interpreted literally, nor yet is it normally allegorical. In respect of these particular passages Gressmann may, of course, be right in his interpretation ; that is another matter, but it is plain that a finer equipment of psychological discrimination is necessary for the understanding of the more imaginative elements in Hebrew literature.

Furthermore, modern psychologists are emphatic

[1] Isa. ii. 2 ; Micah iv. 1, with Ezek. xl. 2 and Zech. xiv. 10.
[2] *Der Ursprung der Israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie*, pp. 221 f. Göttingen, 1905.

that the symbolism of poetry and fancy is but an illustration of that picture-thinking which is manifested by us all in dreams. There are still wide differences between the various schools of medical psychologists who investigate dreams and use the analysis of dreams in the course of treatment, but there is complete agreement amongst them, supported by an irrefutable body of evidence, that many dreams, if not all, are highly significant, and that the meaning of them can be determined when, by finding the ideas associated with each little bit of the dream, we can unravel the symbolism of the whole. The real meaning of a dream is almost always hidden, and can only be attained when the various objects which occur in it are taken for symbols of something else. The scientific method of dream interpretation may best be indicated by means of two illustrations from Scripture. It should be premised that there may be legitimate difference of opinion as to whether the two narratives here taken are genuine dreams, and even if they are, there is still the possibility that the interpretation is faulty, but the general method of interpretation is undoubtedly scientific. Both these illustrations have in different ways an important bearing upon our subject. For the first of them I am indebted to Dr. B. H. Streeter, of Oxford.[1] In the eleventh chapter of Acts we have the story of Peter's dream on the housetop at Joppa. Peter, who was staying in the half-heathen town of Joppa, may reasonably be supposed to have had on his mind the problem of the relationship of Gentiles to the Christian Church ; he was sitting on the roof, and he was hungry ; he fell asleep, and his dream was, as is so often if not

[1] See *Hibbert Journal*, January 1925.

always the case, a wish-fulfilment: food comes down from heaven for him, and he is told to eat. But the food before him is "unclean." Now the unclean meats are a transparent symbol for the "unclean" Gentiles; this we might have guessed for ourselves, but the fact is clinched by Peter's own recognition of it when he wakes. The dream, then, is dealing with the problem which was on his mind as he fell asleep. The psychologists say that the particular details of dreams generally are drawn from some event or sight experienced shortly before the dream. Hence the "sheet," or more correctly the "sail" (*'othune*); possibly the ships were visible at sea from the housetop where he rested. Peter receives the word that God has made clean these unclean meats, and he is awakened by the knocking on the door. The modern psychologist would agree that Peter rightly read the meaning of his dream. To this we need only add that analogy would lead us to suppose that prior to the dream Peter's mind had been uncomfortable on this matter of the Gentiles; in his conscious mind his Jewish prejudices still were dominant, but he was repressing those diviner notions which he had received from Jesus Christ. To the psychologist the dream was due to the repression of the qualms of conscience; we do not controvert this if we add that God spoke to Peter through his dream. We should now observe that Peter does not speak of his experience as a dream; he says "in ecstasy I saw a vision." To the psychologist that is a matter of indifference, for the interpretation of a vision seen in trance or ecstasy is along precisely the same lines as in the case of a normal dream. It is plain that we shall be compelled to face the difficult question how far the so-called visions of prophets and

apocalyptists are to be interpreted, if at all, by the methods scientifically employed in the interpretation of dreams.

The second illustration is from the second chapter of the book of Daniel. Antiochus's persecution was at its height. We may picture the author, whom we will call Daniel, as entering the city perhaps by stealth, and seeing in the Temple precincts that image of Olympian Zeus which, perhaps resembling Antiochus himself, had been set up there. That image would seem to him to stand as the visible sign of the heathen empire by which his people was oppressed and of the heathen religion which he scorned and loathed. He remembers the long series of oppressions under which his people has groaned; his blood boils, but he realizes his impotence. How he would like to rise up and sweep the blasphemer out of Jerusalem, as later did the brave Maccabean brothers! Little wonder if in the heat of the moment his deeper and diviner intuitions left him, if he forgot that vengeance belonged unto his God, if he forgot that the Lord's servant should not strive nor cry, but should be the martyr and die "all in his simplicity."[1] That night, as he lies asleep, he dreams. He sees a monstrous image like the image of Zeus Olympios in the Temple, only vaster; it is curiously made, and he recognizes, when he wakes, that it represents the heathen empires of whom he has been thinking. In his dream he sees a small stone, and he knows, as one does know somehow in a dream, that no human hand has thrown it. It strikes the great image on the feet, and the whole image crumbles away to powder. Here is the wish-fulfilment again,

[1] 1 Macc. ii. 37.

the destruction of the heathen image. But the stone begins to grow and grow; it does not strike him as in the least degree strange, and just when it grows so large that it fills the whole world, he wakes up.

I should hesitate to say that this narrative must unquestionably be the transcript of a dream; but be it dream, vision, or more or less conscious artistic creation, the interpretation and the method of interpretation will be the same, and we have another illustration of the way in which God may speak to man in visions and in dreams, bringing home to him those diviner truths which in his waking moments had been repressed into the unconscious.

It is plain enough that Gressmann's alternatives of literal or allegorical are inadequate; in the case of visions, dreams, poems, or other imaginative compositions, we must reckon that we are dealing with symbolism which requires interpretation. These considerations alike create and remove difficulties in the interpretation of prophecy and apocalypse.

One more question must briefly be considered before we turn to the details of exegesis: Is there a psychological distinction between true prophecy and false? Amos foretold a Day of Adonai which should be darkness; his contemporaries prophesied a Day of light. Did Amos arrive at his conclusion by the same sort of psychological process as the others? If we can answer this question we should illuminate our problem of the psychology of prophecy.

In this connection we may first consider the illuminating story of the "false prophets" who prophesied at the court of Ahab.[1] Ahab was pro-

[1] 1 Kings xxii.

posing to go up and fight against Aram for Ramoth in Gilead; he orders his vassal, Jehosaphat, king o Judah, who had no interests in Gilead, to come up with him. But although apparently the decision fo war had already been taken, it was thought suitable to inquire of Adonai concerning the enterprise, presumably to be assured that the present was a favourable and auspicious moment to attack. They consulted, therefore, the four hundred prophets who practised at Ahab's court. The two kings, we read sat each on his throne arrayed in his royal robes in an open space at the gate of Samaria, "and all the prophets prophesied before them." It would appear that these prophets worked themselves up into some sort of ecstasy, and all shouted or chanted together "Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for Adonai shall deliver it into the hand of the king." One of the prophets, Zedekiah ben Hanaanah, in the course of prophesying, "made him horns of iron and said Thus hath Adonai said, with these shalt thou push the Syrians till they be consumed." But the kings are not quite satisfied; they want to hear what Micaiah ben Imlah has to say; he has a reputation for being a gloomy prophet. Adjured to speak the whole truth and nothing but the truth, Micaiah says "I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd; and Adonai said These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace."[1] When Micaiah says "I saw," are we to understand that at the kings' command he fell into a trance, and this was the vision that came to him? It may indeed have been so, but nothing in the text requires us to suppose so; rather

[1] 1 Kings xxii. 17.

the fact that at first he returns a mocking answer to the kings would suggest that he was all the time in his sober senses, and that what he "saw" was something he had seen before he had been summoned by the kings. The facts are adequately explained if we suppose that as he had meditated upon this projected campaign, there had come to him, awake or asleep, or possibly in trance, a presentiment which he could neither prove nor deny that the campaign would end disastrously.

Ahab suggests that no credence should be placed upon Micaiah's gloomy words on the ground that it is his rôle and habit to prophesy in this way. Micaiah therefore takes it upon him to explain how it is that he differs from the four hundred prophets; his explanation is of great significance for our present inquiry. He says: "I saw Adonai sitting on His throne and all the host of heaven standing by him on His right hand and on His left. And Adonai said, Who shall entice Ahab that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner, and there came forth a spirit and stood before Adonai and said, I will entice him, and Adonai said, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets, and he said, Thou shalt entice him and shalt prevail also: go forth and do so. Now therefore behold Adonai hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and Adonai hath spoken evil concerning thee." [1] We may not be able to accept Micaiah's explanation as a satisfactory solution of our problem, but its implications are significant. In the first place it should be observed that Micaiah in no way accuses the "false"

[1] 1 Kings xxii. 20.

prophets of any conscious dishonesty or hypocrisy; he testifies that they were acting in good faith. In the second place, it should be plain that Micaiah's vision of the heavenly council-chamber is connected with Ahab's known intention to attack Ramoth. Adonai's intention to destroy Ahab at a particular place (Ramoth) is ridiculous, unless the prophet knew that Ramoth was in Ahab's mind; Adonai might destroy Ahab in a thousand ways, if his destruction were desired. From the psychological point of view it is evident that Micaiah had been meditating on the situation; he knew that Ahab had it in mind to attack Ramoth and renew the Syrian war; it was borne in upon the prophet in a flash that Ahab would perish there at Ramoth. Whether this presentiment or intuitive conviction came upon him awake or in trance or asleep is for our present purpose a matter of indifference. Micaiah knew, or thought he knew, that if Ahab went he would be killed. That was bedrock conviction for him. But how was it to be reconciled with the fact that the other prophets of Adonai were unanimous in their support of the king's policy? That also must be due to the inscrutable counsel of Adonai; Adonai Himself must be deceiving His own prophets that they may not thwart His will. In the third place, even if it be granted that this "vision" came to Micaiah in some secondary condition, such as a day-dream or a trance, we have still to observe that the "vision" of the heavenly council is obviously what the psychologists call a "rationalization" from his primary instinctive conviction that the expedition would be attended with disaster. This may well be a matter of importance. *The prophet does not derive his certainty of the impending disaster from this vision, but*

the vision from the assurance of disaster. In the case of the sahdu Sundar Singh it has been observed that, if confronted with a difficult problem involving speculation or theory, he will refuse to give an answer, but it not infrequently happens that shortly afterwards he will in ecstasy receive a vision, and the purport of the vision will be an answer to the question propounded earlier. Psychologically the process is not unlike that whereby a mathematician will solve a problem in his sleep. There is no doubt profound truth in the contention of Jung and other psychological doctors that dreams often, if not always, present us with an attempted solution of life's problems. We may take it, then, as reasonably certain that Micaiah's vision of the heavenly council-chamber was a dream or trance solution of his tantalizing problem, how he could be so certain of the disaster that would come to Ahab while the other prophets disagreed with him. It should again be pointed out that there is no difficulty in ascribing to God some visions and dreams if we ascribe to him the inspiration of some waking thoughts. To call a vision a rationalization is not to deny it spiritual worth in this case or any other.

We should now further consider the psychology of the "false" prophets. We are presumably right to suppose that Ahab solemnly summoned these four hundred prophets and suggested to them that he was proposing to attack Ramoth, and asked them to divine for him the will of Adonai. We are bound to suppose that, if they were ordinary men of their day, their hearts would leap up at the thought of being once again at their enemies' throats; they would work up their ecstasy under the glow of this powerful suggestion. It is no wonder they all came to the one

conclusion that it was according to Adonai's will and purpose that Ahab should go up to Ramoth. Once they had submitted themselves to this mass-suggestion, it was inevitable they should so think. When they discussed the matter amongst themselves, before or after their ecstasy, there would be many rational or quasi-rational considerations before them. They were patriots, and the Syrian war was the great patriotic interest of the day. The bene Israel were the people of Adonai, and this was a holy war ; they would refer doubtless to the atrocities committed by Damascus [1] ; they would urge that Israel must go to the defence and rescue of Ramoth to deliver it from the enemies of civilization. Indeed, is it to be doubted that those whom we unkindly call " false prophets " said in their own language very much what from that day to this the ministers of religion have always said about a popular war ? They were wholly genuine and honest in their conviction, but in this case they were deceived, and have won the title of " false prophets."

Next it is to be observed as one of the curiosities of history that there were two sorts of prophets in ancient Israel, who may be described respectively as prophets of weal and prophets of woe, and that the prophets of weal have for the most part been forgotten, while the prophets of woe have been regarded as amongst the religious leaders of mankind. It is true that not a few oracles of hope come to us from the prophets of woe, but the broad distinction remains that Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and others predicted national doom for apostasy and sin, and that they were all opposed by another set of prophets, who encouraged the people to rest upon the good pleasure of Adonai

[1] See Amos i. 3–5.

their God, and to expect a glorious future at His hands. Amongst the prophets of weal are to be numbered the four hundred at the court of Ahab, the followers of Elisha, who was said to be worth an army corps to the Israelites in their war against Damascus, Jonah ben Amittai,[1] the opponents of Amos, with their doctrine of a glorious Day. There was a similar sharp division between Hosea and his contemporary prophets[2]; Micah had to meet prophets who "make my people err," who cry "peace" to anyone who will feed them, but "war" to any who will not.[3] By Micah these men are definitely accused of partisan judgments, as by Isaiah with drunkenness[4]; Zephaniah calls them light and treacherous persons.[5] The only prophets of weal whose writings became canonical are Second Isaiah, Nahum and Habakkuk, and we shall have to enquire whether their message really belongs to the party opposed by the other great literary prophets.

In so far as the prophets of weal ate at the king's table, and were even perhaps in some sense "official chaplains," if the term may be allowed, we can readily believe it may have been difficult for them to speak faithfully; and indeed it is difficult for any man to face a problem dispassionately and coolly where bread and butter for his family may be concerned. Moreover, it would be part of the duty of such prophets to inspire and sustain the courage of the people and of their rulers in war-time, and the glory of the king is not unnaturally conceived as the glory of the national religion and the national God; thus patriotism and religion get so confused and mingled together that they can scarcely be separated even in thought. In recent

[1] 2 Kings xiv. 25. [2] Hosea ix. 7. [3] Micah iii. 5.
[4] Isa. xxviii. 7. [5] Zeph. iii. 4.

years there has been not a little minor prophecy of this kind in Europe, both within and without established Churches. Throughout Hebrew history, then—or, to be precise, during those periods when there was any prophecy in Israel—there would appear to have been a succession of men, sometimes at least honest to the best of our knowledge, who filled the people with the rosiest and most optimistic hopes, assuring them that the best was yet in store, that they had nothing to fear and everything to hope and to expect; there could be no people like the bene Israel; God must vindicate them, and that right early; they were sinned against, not sinning, and God must take vengeance on their enemies. This message was further developed by some of the apocalyptists, and we have to recognize that the work and teaching of these men was one of the greatest stumbling-blocks and hindrances in the way of those whom we now call the great prophets, as later of Jesus Christ Himself: "The Day of Adonai is darkness and not light. I say unto you, God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham; unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Granted the honesty, in the main, of these prophets of weal, it should be recognized that they raise for us profound psychological and spiritual problems, which closely and vitally concern the Christian ministry precisely in so far as it stands in the prophetic tradition. For the moment we may put the problem in terms of the modern ministry. A minister sees a congregation in front of him; he knows something of his people's individual difficulties and fears and trials, their disappointments and their hopes; as a human being he longs to comfort them, as a Christian he believes that Christ came to give men joy and peace

and quiet of mind. It is an inevitable temptation to such a minister to say the word his people long to hear—the word that will comfort them most quickly and can patch them up most expeditiously that they may return to the firing-line. If by the force of his personality and of his preaching he is able so to comfort them, it is natural that he and they should feel that this comfort comes from God. It is equally natural that such a minister, busy with many cares and with the sorrows of men always about him, should find but little time to be on the mountain-tops alone with God and to enquire whether this is indeed that comfort wherewith God comforteth His people. Do his people need a sleeping-draught or a knife? Are they to be soothed and comforted by the assurance that all is well, or must they learn to have their feet so planted on the rock, their faith in God so sure, that they will be above all fear and all weakness? We have not sufficiently considered the disquieting fact that, when we look back upon the history of Israel, we are agreed in calling their popular preachers by the name of "false prophets."

Again, Dr. Gunkel, writing in war-time, and doubtless with his own country in his mind, says: "A people that is conscious of its own power, for that very reason sees before it a great history which it desires to experience, and comforts itself with this hope in time of national stress." [1] That is to say, the same thing happens on a national scale which is familiar as an individual experience. When we are young, we feel latent within us powers which we long to exercise; we build castles in the air and plan out a glorious future for ourselves. So with a nation. The English

[1] *Die Propheten*, p. 36.

or the German people feels within itself immense powers not yet used and developed; it also builds castles in the air; it feels that its dreams must come true. This may be self-deception, but it is not insincere; it may have been by no conscious insincerity that the prophets of weal pictured the future of Israel in glowing terms and bade men "get on with the war." Moreover, this expectation of weal is connected with a deep assurance about the very nature of things. A young man does not easily think that he may die before his work is done; a nation feels it would be an irrational universe if the future it has pictured for itself should be denied it; under such circumstances faith in God would go. Thus it naturally comes to be part of religious faith to believe in the destiny of Israel, as many alleged during the recent war that they would cease to believe in God if their nation should prove unsuccessful. Were not the religion and institutions of Israel vastly superior to those of Damascus? Could Melkart of Tyre be compared for an instant with Yahweh of Israel? Were not the bloodthirsty Assyrians, with their cynical *real-politik* and their militarism, the enemies of civilization? Yes, but that did not carry the conclusion that Israel would be saved from captivity and utter destruction. So taught the prophets of woe, and the realities of history vindicated their words in blood and fact.

"False prophecy" is in many aspects no puzzle at all to the modern psychologist. It is common enough for a person conscious of some weakness and inferiority in the presence of his fellows to compensate his self-respect by dreams or phantasies of the great powers that are dormant within him and of the great achievements he will one day accomplish. Extreme instances

of this will be the lunatics who fancy themselves to be Napoleon or Solomon or some other great figure of the past or present. But much more normal persons " fancy themselves " or have a phantasy about themselves, thinking of themselves " more highly than they ought to think." These little self-deceptions are often fairly innocuous, as when the prosaic scholar dreams himself a poet. Others, again, suppose themselves to be unappreciated or slighted or even persecuted. Others retire from the real world, which treats them with scant courtesy, into a phantasy world like a child's fairyland, where all goes well with them, nothing is impossible, and their thwarted desires and passions are fulfilled. Such powers of imagination are not necessarily morbid. Happy is the captive who in dream or reverie can wander at will amidst the fields and meadows; happy is the drudge who by the magical powers of imagination can visualize and feel part of that larger world which his drudgery serves. But that world of imagination, where all our wishes are fulfilled, is not the map and measure of the future. The desire that Ahab should triumph at Ramoth, the longing of an impotent people that the glories of the reign of David should be restored, the ineffectual hatred of the enemy and the oppressor, are quite enough in the eyes of a psychologist to account for the bright visions of the future vouchsafed to " prophets " in a condition of trance, when the desires of the unconscious mind seem to have unrestrained power to stand revealed. Indeed, our difficulty is not to give a psychological account of false prophecy, but to show, if it be possible, that true prophecy, such as we find in the great literary prophets of Israel, is not also mere phantasy and self-deception. Profound philosophical questions

are here involved as to the right and the wrong use of the imagination in religion; for the visions of the prophets we call true are not less the work of the *imagination* than those of the prophets usually called false. But whereas the vaticinations of the prophets of weal are the outcome or "outcrop" of the imagination working upon *the material presented by the desires*, the prophecies of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others, as I hope to show in the sequel, always express the result of profound meditation into *the meaning and order of the actual world*—in other words, they are not mere fancies; they are interpretations; in particular, these visions are based upon insight into the moral order. It is because of this ethical insight and this intellectual element that there is a profound and fundamental difference between the oracles of Amos and those of his contemporaries. We often find in the great prophets oracles of weal, of good hope, visions of a happy and a blessed future; verbally, these may often not differ greatly from the oracles of the false prophets, but, as I hope to show, the oracles of the great prophets, whether for weal or for woe, are always ethically conditioned (except in cases of mere presentiment), whereas the same is not true of the prophets of weal, the opponents of the great prophets. These false prophets prophesied "out of their own hearts"; their phantasy worked upon the basis of their desires. The visions of the great prophets, whether for weal or woe, are, in fact, the result of careful thought, of ethical insight and principle; they are interpretations of the meaning of the real world, not imaginative pictures of the world as they would like it to be. The detailed proof of this must follow later.

We may now pass from these general considerations to a more detailed study of the prophetic texts. It may, however, be premised that the somewhat tentative conclusions of the present chapter are fortified by, and not to be dissociated from, the argument of the succeeding chapters, and that it is only in the case of Jeremiah and Ezekiel that we have sufficient evidence to enable us to come to a relatively sure conclusion.

Amos.

About Amos in this connection there is unhappily not much that can be confidently asserted, but we turn to the consideration of him without any preconceived idea of the psychological conditions of his prophetic ministry. We are not predisposed to the theory that in manner and form his prophesying must have conformed to the pattern of the *nebi'im* of Saul's day ; on the other hand, we shall by no means be surprised to find hallucinatory and other elements in his experience strange to the more phlegmatic amongst us.

When we turn to the text it cannot, I think, be reasonably denied that the scene described in ix. 1 ff. may involve elements of hallucination. The text, it is true, is in some disorder, but apart from that difficulty, it is not *prima facie* clear whether the prophet is attempting to describe a destruction of the Bethel altar and the congregation of worshippers which in hallucination he so sees as present and actual that, coming out of the ecstasy, he would be surprised to find the Temple still standing, or whether, as he regards the altar at Bethel, he sees in imaginative vision as present a destruction which he knows to be in the future ; but in view of the future sense of vers. 1b–4,

it is probable that he has a vision of the future psychologically parallel to Wordsworth's vision of the past.[1] It is generally quite impossible to say in cases of this kind how far the speaker intends to convey the meaning that his eyes saw the vision as something objectively real and present. In English we draw a distinction between " I saw " and " I seemed to see " ; it is doubtful if it would have occurred to a Hebrew poet or prophet to draw or to recognize this distinction.[2] Of ecstasy, whether cataleptic or maniacal, there is here no clear indication. The probability is the other way. Those who regard Amos as an ecstatic in the sense defined above [3] have to maintain that his oracles are short, staccato utterances. That, however, would not appear to be the case. The chapter under discussion would seem to contain a continuous and carefully articulated poem of some length in vers. 1–4, with which as final and dramatic conclusion vers. 7–8b may well be taken. Again, the woes of Chaps. i and ii form, as we have them, a long and carefully composed poem. Chap. vi. 1–6 is certainly a unity, and indeed short, staccato utterances are not especially characteristic of Amos. But arguments of this kind cannot be quite conclusive, owing to our ignorance of the work of editing, whether by the author or others.

Interesting psychological problems are raised by vii. 1–8. How far are we dealing here with vision and hallucination, and how far with history ? Are these

[1] See supra, p. 20.

[2] There is much to be said for the view that Amos's vision of the future destruction is moulded by the dreadful experiences of an earthquake, and that we should accordingly read *bera'ash* for *bero'sh* in verse 1 ; so Sellin and others.

[3] See supra, p. 18.

three " visions " to be called visions *in the same sense*? If for the moment we regard the first two stanzas alone, it would be natural to connect the grasshoppers and the devouring fire with the teaching of iv. 6–11; but this does not help us much, for it is a question whether the famine, drought and pestilence referred to in Chap. iv are to be regarded as past or future. The third stanza is equally obscure. If Amos saw Adonai with a plummet in his hand, this can only have been in vision or hallucination. We should, however, observe that, were it not for this ver. 7, no one would think of hallucination in connection with the passage. If the stanza had begun " And Adonai said unto me, Amos, what seest thou? and I said, A plummet . . .," we should have a parallel to viii. 1 f., where we should naturally think of an authentic and tangible basket which was the ground or immediate cause of the religious experience and message recorded in these verses. It seems in the present case most natural to assume that Amos, watching a builder at work with a plummet, fell into a reverie or other secondary condition and saw with the eye of imagination or of hallucination Adonai Himself with a plummet, and the conviction came to him that the destruction of Israel was now at last inevitable and certain. The other oracles of Amos we should not suppose to have been delivered in trance or ecstasy, unless the probability of this should have been shown in the instances already taken. It will be seen that we have very meagre and insufficient data upon which to build a picture or theory of the prophet's *furor*; we shall come to clearer indications in the case of later prophets. For the present, and as regards Amos, our conclusions must be tentative but having regard to the general

literary form and structure of the book and to the particular passages where the verb of vision is employed, we should apparently be wise to suppose that on some occasions at any rate the prophet's inspiration may have been accompanied by hallucinations. But these hallucinations may be taken as comparable to that of Wordsworth on Salisbury Plain; perhaps they involved auditions like that of Dickens composing the "Pickwick Papers." Of cataleptic ances and maniac ravings there is no evidence, even if no disproof of them is possible.

Hosea.

Upon the basis of ix. 7 Hölscher maintains that Hosea was identified by the common people with the vulgar ecstatics; therefore, he argues, Hosea must have conformed to their manners and appearance.[1] But the argument is, in effect, no more than an iteration of the contention that anyone who was called *nabi'* must *eo ipso* have been an ecstatic, which is precisely the matter to be proved. It is true that Hosea, in part at least, speaks in the inspired first person, and it *may* be right with Hölscher to infer from this that such prophecies were delivered in the prophetic "trance," but were such utterances as impersonal to the prophet as the utterances of a demon to the person possessed—the parallel is Gunkel's[2]—or was the prophet consciously identified with his message? This is the point that matters, and there is no doubt about the answer to it. The problem of the relation of the first three chapters to the rest of the book of Hosea is not yet solved,[3] but, if it can be

[1] *Die Profeten*, p. 214.
[2] *Propheten*, p. 7.
[3] See infra, pp. 133 ff.

shown that Hosea's message springs out of reflection upon the experiences of his own life, it will be increasingly difficult to find plausible colour for the view that his prophecies were "dribbled" out in the state of prophetic mania, the more so in that the text affords no indication of any such seizures.

Neither Amos nor Hosea, then, affords us any very decisive data.

Isaiah.

"Isaiah, like Amos and Hosea," says Hölscher,[1] "is an ecstatic prophet." In support of this thesis Hölscher points out that, after the manner of earlier prophets, Isaiah regarded himself as able to work miracles by the power of his God, that in the external forms of his ministry he largely conformed to the old prophetic type, as in the use of symbolical acts like the "grotesque" proceeding of going "naked" three years as a sign to the people. Moreover, he had powers of second sight. It is true that only one vision is quite certainly recorded of him, but this is because his experiences came to him generally in the form of auditions when he was in an entirely passive or "will-less" state. At the same time, Hölscher recognizes in Isaiah a development beyond the earlier prophets, whose passivity was, he thinks, almost complete in respect of all their prophetic utterances; he traces in Isaiah the influence of reflection upon ecstasy: "More strongly than in the case of his predecessors the clarity of logical thought makes itself apparent in Isaiah; ecstatic feeling is illuminated by reflection."[2]

[1] Op. cit., p. 243.

[2] Op. cit., pp. 244–6.

Here once more it would be idle to enter into a controversy as to the use of words. The protagonists of the "ecstatic" view of prophecy would appear to use the term "ecstasy" in a very wide sense. There is much in Hölscher's description of Isaiah with which it is possible largely to agree, but the use of the term "ecstasy" and the constant reference backwards to the frenzied *nebi'im* of earlier days seem to me to result in a generally distorted picture. It is Hölscher's psychology that is fundamentally inadequate. To the modern psychologist the scribblings of the automatist script are quite as truly the product of reflection as the stanza laboriously composed with the help of the rhyming dictionary, only in the former case the reflection has been unconscious or "sub-conscious." The two matters that are really important for religion are first, whether the prophet in the prophetic *furor* is "dissociated" to use the psychological term—that is, whether he is a case of dual personality, like a person sometimes normal and sometimes possessed by a "demon"; and second, whether his oracles are the work of unbridled fancy or of reflection into the meaning and purpose of the real world. If, as can be shown, Isaiah's message was emphatically his own message—a message that filled and mastered his conscious mind and with which he was consciously identified—and if further his message arose out of deep reflection and moral intuition in respect of God's rea world and the meaning of history, there can be no doubt that the references back to the earlier frenzied prophecy are very much more misleading than helpful. Poems like "the Pobble who has no toes" and "the Dong with the luminous nose" may have been written when the author was in a normal state of consciousness

the *Ode on the Intimations of Immortality* may be the result of audition and hallucination, but whereas the former are the result of the *imagination* working unchecked, the latter is the work of the imagination dealing with the meaning and interpretation of elements in the real world of human experience.

But, in fact, it is exceedingly difficult to agree that even in respect of externals the prophetic work of Isaiah was like that of the earlier *nebi'im*. We may well agree with Hölscher that the vision recorded in Chap. vi is not a symbolical way of expressing an idea, it is not a trick of the prophet's literary style, but is the transcript of a genuine experience.[1] That there were hallucinatory elements in this inaugural vision may be taken as substantially certain; but it by no means follows that the inaugural vision is typical of Isaiah's normal experiences as a prophet. If it be true that Isaiah believed that God would work a miracle to authenticate his message, we find here no proof of mental instability, for a supernaturalism of that sort would appear to have been the common faith of all. If, as seems probable, Isaiah went about for three years or so dressed in the garb of a captive, we may assume, if we like, that the divine command to do this came to him in ecstasy, but certainly the command must have been carried out in ordinary waking consciousness and with a clear idea of the meaning and value of the act. What necessity have we to assume that Isaiah named his first-born son as he did, as the result of an audition in a trance? Indeed, Hölscher recognizes that some of the prophecies of Isaiah are rather poems than the oracles of the God-possessed seer.[2] Later discussions[3] will indicate the reflective

[1] Op. cit., p. 245. [2] Ib., p. 246. [3] See infra, Ch. v.

element in Isaiah's teaching and its coherence adding weight to the considerations above; for the moment it must suffice that while we recognize the sixth chapter to record a genuine vision with hallucinatory elements in it, we have found no grounds for supposing that Isaiah was an ecstatic in the same sense as the "sons of the prophets" or the four hundred who prophesied at the court of Ahab.

Jeremiah.

For this part of our enquiry the book of Jeremiah is of critical importance; for in the first place we know more of the inner life of Jeremiah than of any other prophet; and in the second, if it can be shown that Jeremiah was an ecstatic, there will be a strong presumption that the same is true of Amos, Hosea, Micah and Isaiah, and the argument from silence will weigh little against this extreme probability. Jeremiah is in a measure the test case for the ecstatic theory.

According to Hölscher, Jeremiah was a thorough ecstatic (*durchaus ekstatiker*); he was popularly reckoned a madman, and outwardly he differed little from the vulgar ecstatics of his day. It was as an ecstatic that he was subject to the priestly discipline and the stocks; his ecstasy was shown in loud crying and constant repetition of words, and throughout he shows signs of hallucinatory symptoms.[1] We must consider this contention in detail.

To prove that outwardly Jeremiah differed little from the vulgar ecstatics of his age, Hölscher cites a number of passages which indicate that Jeremiah, like

[1] Op. cit., p. 276.

the vulgar ecstatics, was wont to betake himself to the Temple precincts to preach or prophesy; but it would be hazardous to argue that all who stand in the same pulpit must preach under the same inspiration or in the same manner. If Jeremiah wished his preaching to reach the ears of Jerusalem, where but to the Temple courts should he go?

In xxix. 24 ff. we read that Shemaiah had written to Zephaniah reminding him of his duty to imprison and punish madmen and those who made themselves out to be prophets, and urging him so to punish Jeremiah. From this Hölscher argues that Jeremiah was reckoned a madman like the vulgar prophets, and therefore presumably he was like them in outward appearance. But the basis and conclusion of the argument are alike insecure. In the first place, Jeremiah is not called a madman in the text, and it is by no means clear that even in the message of Shemaiah the terms madman and prophet are terms of identical meaning. In the second place, the proof of Jeremiah's "madness" and "raving" lies in his address to the exiles bidding them settle down in their new homes! Is any document in history more sane and less ecstatic than Jeremiah's letter to the exiles? Peake properly comments that "the sanity of the prophet was never more apparent than when he administered this cold douche of common sense to their fevered enthusiasm." [1] In xx. 1 ff. (a passage likewise adduced by Hölscher in support of his thesis) we find that the reason given for Jeremiah's being put in the stocks is not his ecstasy, but "these words," namely, his very unpopular message.

Next, what evidence does Hölscher afford that

[1] *Century Bible*, ad loc.

Jeremiah's loud crying and constant repetition of words indicate ecstatic conditions? He cites vi. 4, vii. 4, xxii. 29. The repetitions in vi. 4 f. clearly indicate the tension of the poet, but the *furor poeticus* is not ecstasy in Hölscher's sense. The reference to Chap. vii is to the threefold repetition of the phrase "the Temple of Adonai." It might here be argued upon the basis of metrical requirements, with the support of the LXX, that the second repetition is a gloss; but even if that be not the case, it has to be remembered that Jeremiah is quoting his opponents, not giving his own message. More impressive is xxii. 29, with its threefold adjuration of earth to hear the word of Adonai. But here the text is uncertain; the verse is regarded as a gloss by Duhm, Erbt, Cornill and others, and Volz strikes out the two repetitions of the word. But even if the verse be genuine and in place, they do not go far to prove Hölscher's theory of ecstasy.

Still, these minor criticisms would not weigh heavily if Hölscher could substantiate his main thesis that in Jermiah we find constant traces of hallucinatory symptoms.

In i. 9 it is stated that Adonai put forth His hand and touched the prophet's mouth. The whole passage might be not unnaturally interpreted of an auditory and tactile hallucination. Moreover, "we may believe that . . . the vision and related psychical phenomena were the necessary authentication of the prophet's standing, both to himself and to the people whom he addressed." [1] Nothing requires us to deny hallucinatory elements in the inaugural experience when the prophet was set apart by Adonai for his

[1] Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, p. 13.

life-work. This further contention that his office must have been outwardly attested by psychical manifestations is really weighty; but, as was said above, we must beware of forming *a priori* notions of the degree of strangeness which would be taken to authenticate a prophet, and we must beware of arguing from an inaugural or an occasional vision to a life of constant vision and hallucination. In giving an account of that experience in virtue of which Jeremiah claimed to come forward as a prophet, can we suppose that he was not careful to speak exactly? We are certainly wise to take his words as literally as is ever legitimate when experiences of the soul and the evidence of the senses are so united that plain prose is an impossible medium of description. At the same time Skinner wisely points out "that the element of *vision* in the literal sense is here very slight: the prophet is aware of the presence of Yahweh and feels the touch of His hand upon his mouth, but he does not say that he *saw* Him."[1] It is quite impossible with the evidence at our disposal to define the degree of absorption or of trance or of hallucination to which the prophet was subject at this great moment of his life; such an enquiry would have been unintelligible to him as it is fascinating to us. But we are certainly wise to suppose that Jeremiah's account is as precise as he could make it, and it might well be granted that he fell into a trance, but from this admission it would not follow that he was a thorough ecstatic or outwardly indistinguishable from the vulgar prophets of his own and earlier days.

In further illustration of ecstasy and hallucination in Jeremiah, Hölscher refers to iii. 21; iv. 13, 15,

[1] Skinner, *Prophecy and Religion*, p. 26.

18–21, 23–6, 31; v. 13 f.; vi. 11; viii. 16, 19 f.; x. 22; xxiii. 9.[1]

Chap. iii. 21 occurs in a passage where the poet pictures the repentance and godly sorrow of the northern tribes; in imagination he hears the cry of repentance arise from the bare heights; the poet puts a speech into the lips of repentant Israel. It seems absurd to suggest that this necessarily or even probably involves an audition on the part of the prophet; we make no such assumption when a later poet writes "hark the sound of holy voices chanting round the glassy sea." Are we to suppose with Robinson[2] that every time a prophet speaks in the name of Adonai he is reporting an audition? Conceivably it may be so, but analogous evidence from poets and preachers should made us wary of assuming this for a fact.

Hölscher's evidence from Chap. iv comes from the cycle of the so-called Scythian songs. If these poems represented a purely imaginative prophecy of that which was about to come to pass, there would be some force in the suggestion of "ecstasy"; but it is most likely that these poems are neither an exact description of contemporary events nor yet purely imaginary statements of a future calamity, but rather a description of the actual havoc wrought by the Scythians put in the terms, not of prose, but of poetry, together with an apprehension of the immediate future springing out of the experiences of the present. If, as is probable, these songs originally referred to the Scythian invasion, certain difficulties are removed if we assume that they were later edited with an eye to the Babylonian peril. It is as if in the early weeks of August 1914 some French poet, seeing the havoc already wrought, had

[1] Op. cit., p. 294. [2] Op. cit., pp. 43 f.

vividly pictured the sweep of the enemy to the walls of Paris and heard the desperate cry of the hard-pressed city. In such a case we should speak of poetic inspiration and even rapture, of the poetic imagination and vivid creative power, but we should not be tempted to assume that his poems came by automatic handwriting or even that he wrote in a condition of ecstasy, as defined above. The songs might be compared with the *Supplices* of Æschylus, and it is more illuminating so to compare them than with the ravings of a dervish in a trance.

These general considerations cover some of the verses cited by Hölscher, but we should deal in particular with vers. 18–21, 23–6 of Chap. iv. Verse 19, translated by Welch,[1] "Ah, my heart, my heart, I writhe in pain; my mind is in sore trouble; I cannot hold my peace, for hark! I seem to hear the trumpet-sound and battle-cry," is almost decisive against ecstasy in the sense of the trance of the early *nebi'im*; for it is clear that the prophet is not speaking as an automaton, but is only too vividly conscious of his words; it is clear, too, that he is not in that anæsthetic condition which is a frequent accompaniment of trance. Of the following vers. 23–6 I shall have much more to say later.[2] It is taken by many to be a vision of chaos come again, and as such to involve ecstasy. I hope to show that this is a misreading of the stanza. In any event, Robinson's comment that "the highest poetic imagination could hardly have achieved this"[3] is not apt, for there can be no disagreement amongst psychologists that the stanza is

[1] *The Book of Jeremiah translated into Colloquial English*, National Adult School Union.

[2] See infra, pp. 192 f.

[3] Op. cit., p. 43.

equally the product of the imagination, whether it be given in trance or some more normal condition.

I do not understand why Hölscher supposes that v. 13 f. involves ecstasy or hallucination ; an Oriental poet may not be incapable of forceful imagery when in his sober senses.

Chap. vi. 11 affords better *prima facie* evidence for Hölscher's theory. It certainly involves a state of very intense feeling, such as Paul felt when necessity was laid upon him to preach the Gospel, and woe betide him if he did not preach. The passage would be consistent with the view that Jeremiah suffered from a " compulsion-neurosis," if anyone should wish to maintain that depressing hypothesis. But, quite apart from the question of hallucination, the passage seems inconsistent with the view that Jeremiah was in ecstasy ; for ecstasy psychologically regarded is a passive state in that the patient sees or hears or speaks, but does not struggle by obtruding his own feelings and desires. But Jeremiah struggles with himself ; he is in a very wakeful state ; he sees the children at play in the street ; as he watches them, he is overwhelmed with a sense of the destruction about to fall upon them, and is constrained to cry " woe " over the city, even to an audience of children. But even this may be to grant too much to Hölscher. The imperative " pour it out " is strange, and it is natural to read, with LXX and many, " I will pour it out." That is to say, it is not clear that the scene ever really takes place, that he ever did in reality address a dreadful commination to the children at their play.

The references viii. 16 and 19 f., x. 22, add no new point, but Hölscher is fully justified in stressing

xxiii. 9 in support of his thesis: "On account of Yahweh and His holy words, my mind is confused. I tremble in every limb; I have become like a drunk man, mastered with wine." [1] English commentators have perhaps been in danger of minimizing or explaining away this passage. Thus Skinner speaks of the prophet's "distress" [2]; Peake paraphrases "I am unstrung" [3]; Wheeler Robinson "overcome." [4] These expressions seem hardly strong enough, but should we go to the other extreme and speak of ecstasy? Some strong moving of the spirit, some violent psychic storm, would seem here to be obscurely described, the psychical or physical concomitants of horror or of sorrow vividly realized; but we are not involved in the supposition that Jeremiah staggered about the streets under stress of emotion or that his prophecies were normally or ever delivered when he was in this state of appalment.

In xviii. 1 ff. we have the parable drawn from the potter and his work. The image of the potter has become so familiar to us that we naturally suppose Jeremiah, hearing the divine command to go to the potter's house, would guess at once what lesson would there be imparted to him. We might therefore take the passage to mean no more than that Jeremiah, after the lesson had come home to him in the potter's house, realized that it was Adonai Himself who that day had put it into his heart to visit the potter. But we may take it, if we will, that Jeremiah that day felt drawn, he knew not why, to visit the potter, and there the inspiration came to him. But it is very far from necessary to suppose that while he was in the

[1] Welch.
[2] Op. cit., p. 185.
[3] *Century Bible*, ad loc.
[4] Ad loc. in Peake's *Commentary*.

house he fell into some sort of ecstatic trance in which divine words were spoken to him. If this be conceded, we have important light upon our problem. In xviii. 2 Adonai says: "Go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words." This verse would appear to be an integral part of the poem, not an editorial preface.[1] We have therefore in ver. 5 an illustration of the way in which Jeremiah heard, or at least sometimes heard, the voice of Adonai. The only natural interpretation of the passage is that in the house the word or message of Adonai dawned upon his consciousness. This passage of itself, then, is nearly decisive against the view that Jeremiah was a "thorough ecstatic"; it is much nearer the truth to say he was a religious poet.

We may next consider a somewhat similar passage, xxxii. 6 ff., where we read of the purchase of the plot of ground at Anathoth. In ver. 6 the word of God to Jeremiah is to the effect that his uncle would visit him and offer him his right of purchasing the land. We might antecedently have expected the poem to continue by telling us that God bade the prophet take his right. Apparently, however, the prophet simply had what we should call a premonition that his uncle was to come. On the arrival of the uncle, Jeremiah recognizes the hand and purpose of God in the matter. Now Jeremiah cannot reasonably be supposed to purchase a field by weighing out the money, calling witnesses, and subscribing to the deed of purchase in a state of trance or mania; it is therefore most reasonable to suppose that the oracle in ver. 15, which is one of the key-words of

[1] See Erbt, ad loc., *Jeremia und seine Zeit*. Göttingen, 1902.

Jeremiah's later ministry, was in no sense a trance-utterance.[1]

For our present purpose we have now sufficiently appraised Hölscher's contention that Jeremiah was a thorough ecstatic. We have found good reason to surmise that he was a man of highly strung disposition; we have seen what may be indications of an occasional hallucination, or something like it. At the same time, in most cases where we have been able to come to any positive conclusion, we have seen that all the probability (to put it no higher) lies on the side of the contention that inspiration with Jeremiah meant normally nothing more unusual than what we should expect to find with any poet or creative artist. Jeremiah was not an ecstatic; and this conclusion fortifies us in our more tentative conclusions in the cases of his great literary predecessors.

Hölscher himself is aware that in certain important matters there is a psychological distinction between Jeremiah and his predecessors, and he gives indications from Jeremiah that ecstatic prophecy was near its end.[2] Earlier prophets had been so filled with the divine Spirit, the hand of Adonai had been so heavy upon them, that their inspiration had been self-evidencing to themselves; but on xxxii. 6–15 Hölscher observes that Jeremiah did not trust the voice within telling him of his uncle's visit until his uncle actually arrived; that is to say, the element of reflection was increasing.[3] This illustration is not very convincing,

[1] That Jeremiah could use symbolical actions with a quiet and deliberate purpose to teach the people, not under the impulse of ecstasy, would be abundantly clear if we could accept as historical the incident of the spoiled girdle, xiii. 1–11, especially as expounded and made not incredible by Erbt, op. cit., pp. 159 ff., but Volz is very probably right to take the passage as a kind of parable. *Kom.*, p. 147. [2] Op. cit. p. 295. [3] Ib., p. 294.

but it would certainly seem to be the case that in a far higher degree than his predecessors Jeremiah was aware of an inward conflict between his own nature and his message. In his colloquies with Adonai he argues, he pleads, he protests. The word of God was not less objective to him than to Amos and to the other prophets who had preceded him, but Jeremiah will not be content with anything less than an inward consent to the message which is given him to deliver; he is not so swept away by the inspiration that resistance is impossible. The very fact of this inward conflict, as has been pointed out,[1] is itself strong evidence against the picture of Jeremiah as an ecstatic. Skinner points to vi. 27–30, where Jeremiah recognizes his function to be an assayer of metals, as marking a spiritual crisis in the life of Jeremiah[2]; it marks the point "when his absolute prediction of the doom of Judah was finally ratified by the verdict of his own conscience on the sin of his people, and his mind was brought to acquiesce in the divine sentence of rejection." This leads to an important distinction within the sphere of the prophetic inspiration. The vaticinations of the true prophets, as I have indicated above,[3] were based upon their insight into the moral order of the universe. This was certainly true of Jeremiah. He never doubted that the nation that sinneth it shall die. But if Skinner be right in respect of this passage, Jeremiah received the assurance of the doom of Judah *prior* to his assurance that Judah was covered by the general principle. Later we shall find possible other indications of the same thing among the prophets. In this case we must, then, distinguish between an oracle which is the outcome

[1] See supra, p. 58. [2] Op. cit., p. 160. [3] See supra, p. 44.

of the prophet's own insight into the moral order on the one hand, and on the other a prognostication of the future which is not a deduction from a general principle, but a presentiment or prevision; the latter we may call a psychic gift, the former a spiritual.

Ezekiel.

There is as great controversy about the psychological conditions of Ezekiel's ministry as in the case of any of the prophets. According to Toy, "Ezekiel's visions . . . are the product of reflection and literary art." [1] He thinks that the narration of prophecies as if seen in ecstasy is for the most part a literary device.[2] On the other hand, Hölscher would have it that Ezekiel exemplifies the forms of the ancient ecstatic prophecy; he raves and bubbles or gushes in speech [3]; he lived among his neighbours in exile as a kind of "dervish"—an object partly of reverence, partly of scorn [4]; there was something eerie or demonic about his actions.[5] Even so careful a scholar as Lofthouse speaks of "a strain of mental abnormality—perhaps of actual malady." [6] According to Buttenwieser, Ezekiel was an ecstatic; at the same time his visions appear to be "the laboured products of speculation and study." [7] These two contentions are not as contradictory as might at first sight appear, and they indicate afresh how comparatively unimportant is this question of the psychological conditions of prophecy. A poet sits long musing, then suddenly the

[1] *Sacred Books of the Old and New Testament: Ezekiel*, p. 119. Jas. Clarke, 1899.
[2] Ib., p. 97.
[3] Op. cit., p. 302.
[4] Ib., p. 306.
[5] Ib., p. 309, n.
[6] *Century Bible*, Ezekiel, p. 7.
[7] Op. cit., pp. 162 f.

fire kindles and the Muse lays hold on him; but the inspiration of the Muse springs out of the long hours of quiet thought. A poet's theory of the inspiration of Ezekiel can hardly fail to be interesting and important; it is worthy of note, therefore, that the young Milton thus refers to Ezekiel's inaugural vision:

> See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
> That whirled the Prophet up at Chebar flood;
> My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,
> To bear me where the tow'rs of Salem stood,
> Once glorious tow'rs, now sunk in guiltless blood:
> There doth my soul in holy vision sit
> In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.[1]

This seems to imply that Milton imagined himself to feel the same sort of "ecstasy" and to be subject to the same sort of "trance" as the prophet Ezekiel; but no one, I think, has yet suggested that Milton in the hour of composition was conformed to the likeness of a dervish.

Of the book of Ezekiel as a whole Driver says: "No critical question arises in connection with the authorship of the book, the whole from beginning to end bearing unmistakably the stamp of a single mind."[2] Similarly Gray says: "No other book of the Old Testament is distinguished by such decisive marks of unity of authorship and integrity as this."[3] Not less emphatically Cornill: "No other (book) so displays from the first letter to the last the same hand, the same spirit, the same sharply defined indi-

[1] From the "Ode on the Passion," 1629.

[2] *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 261, 4th edition, 1892. T. & T. Clark.

[3] *Critical Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 198. Duckworth, 1919.

viduality." [1] This strongly maintained position is certainly remarkable in view of the wide divergences between the Massoretic text and the LXX. My own strong impression is that Ezekiel has suffered not less than other prophets at the hands of an editor or editors. The text of Ezekiel, as we have it, is for the most part undoubtedly in prose. I regard it as an open question whether the authentic prophecies of Ezekiel were not originally in verse. Whether it may be possible to substantiate this view (which is not a new one), and, further, whether on this assumption the original Ezekiel can be disentangled from the editorial additions, are questions where for the present a decided answer seems impossible. The following discussions upon the psychology and theology of Ezekiel therefore must be regarded as tentative; in the case of no other prophet at the present time would the text appear to me to be so uncertain, and the uncertainty of the text induces uncertainty in many crucial cases of exegesis.

We may first consider the passage iii. 22 to iv. 17. After a vision, bands are laid upon the prophet, and he becomes dumb; he takes a tile or tablet and represents the siege of Jerusalem; he is to lie first on his left side and then on his right; bands are laid on him so that he cannot turn; he also prepares special food and drink. All these things are signs to the people. Much controversy surrounds the question how far these things are to be taken literally; alalia, catalepsy and hemiplegia have been ascribed to the prophet. Hölscher maintains against some that the catalepsy was not chronic, but accompanied the pro-

[1] *Einleitung in das alte Testament*, p. 176, 4th edition, 1896. Leipzig.

phetic inspiration.[1] Similarly he thinks that a literal dumbness from 593 to 586 B.C., as required by the text, is impossible, but that the dumbness was literal though intermittent.[2] Lofthouse supposes that the actions narrated were "carried out more or less completely."[3] Davidson pertinently remarks on the other side that "it is evident that the actions referred to here could not have been performed, because they are represented as being done simultaneously. It is while he presses the siege with arms uncovered that the prophet also lies on his side, held down by bands, bearing the sin of the people (vers. 5, 7, 8), and it is while lying immovable in this condition that he prepares cakes upon the coals and eats them (vers. 8, 9)."[4] Similarly Skinner regards these restraints as "moral, and not, as has sometimes been maintained, physical."[5] He adds: "Even Klostermann admits that the binding with ropes had no existence save in Ezekiel's imagination. But if we are obliged to take into account what *seemed* to the prophet, it is better to explain the whole phenomena on the same principle. There can be no good grounds for taking the dumbness as real and the ropes as imaginary. Besides, it is surely a questionable expedient to vindicate a prophet's literalism at the expense of his sanity."[6] Taken by itself, then, it would seem difficult to find in this passage any certain solution of our problem; but considerable light is shed upon it, if it is right to suppose that the original text was in verse and that it has been complicated by prosaic glosses. It may

[1] Op. cit., p. 305.
[2] Ib., pp. 301 f.
[3] Op. cit., p. 74.
[4] Ad. iv. 16, *Cambridge Bible for Schools*.
[5] Ezekiel, *Expositor's Bible*, p. 54.
[6] Ib., p. 55, n.

tentatively be suggested that the original poem ran very much as follows[1]:

iii. 22. And He said, Rise, go to the plain, | and there will I speak with thee. ||
23. And I rose and I went to the plain, | and lo, there the Lord's glory was standing, ||
Like the glory I saw | by the river Chebar, | and I fell on my face. ||
24. Then the Spirit came on me, | set me up on my feet | and spake then to me: ||
Go shut thee within thine house, | 25 and go not thou out in their midst. ||
26. And thy tongue I'll make cleave to thy mouth; | 27 when I speak, I will open thy mouth. ||
iv. 1. And thou, son of man, | go, take thee a tile, | and set it before thee. ||
And portray there the city, Jerusalem, | 2 and lay thou a siege against it; ||
And build thou against it a fort, | and cast up against it a mound; ||
And set thou against it a camp, | and place thou rams round about. ||
3. And thou, thou take thee a pan, | and set it 'twixt thee and the city; ||
And set thou against her thy face; | this shall be for a sign to Israel. ||
7. To the siege thou shalt set thy face, | and thine arm shalt thou make strong against it. ||
4. And lie on thy side, on thy left, | and bear thou the sin of Israel. ||
6. And lie on thy side, on thy right, | and bear thou the sin of Judah. ||
9. And thou, do thou take to thee wheat | and barley and beans and lentils, ||
And put thou them into one vessel, | and of them do thou make thee thy bread. ||
10. And thy food shalt thou eat by weight, | twenty shekels a day; ||

[1] On this hypothesis the text, freed from glosses, is in regular 3 : 3 metre, occasionally alternating with 2 : 2 : 2.

11. Water too shalt thou drink by measure, | the sixth part of an *hin* shalt thou drink ; ||
12. And cakes of barley shalt thou eat ; | with dung of a man shalt thou bake them. ||
13. For thus shall they eat, | even Israel's seed, | what's defiled 'mid the Gentiles. ||
14. Then I said, Woe is me, my Lord ; | behold I was never polluted. ||
Nor of dead nor of torn have I eaten, | nor has fouled flesh entered my mouth. ||
15. (and He said) I grant thee the dung of the cow, | and therewith shalt thou make thee thy bread. ||
16. (and He said) Son of man, behold now I break | the staff of bread in Jerusalem. ||
They shall eat their bread by weight, | they shall drink their water by measure, ||
17. To the end that they lack | both water and bread, | and waste for their sinning. ||

Here it should be observed that, with almost no alteration, the text falls into natural and regular verse if the following glosses be removed : in iii. 22, the first clause concerning the "hand" of Adonai, generally taken to indicate ecstasy ; in iii. 25, all reference to bands and binding ; while iii. 26 f. reads, "And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, but when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth" ; iv. 4–6 becomes, "And lie upon thy left side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of Israel, and thou shalt lie upon thy right side and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah." This, be it observed, would be a clear case of parallelism, and would naturally mean no more than that the prophet should bear upon his heart the iniquity of Israel and Judah, however much he might lie tossing and seeking to be rid of his burden. The reference to so many days will be the comment of a prosy scribe who sought to

press a significance into the passage which it was never meant to bear. Again, iv. 8 goes out with its reference to the binding again and the reference to the number of days in the following verse. Moreover, in the text, as I have ventured to restore it, we have no one long poem, but a number of oracles loosely connected together, namely, iii. 22–7, iv. 1–3 with 7, iv. 4–6, iv. 9 ff. Again, in this reconstruction no question of neurotic symptoms arises. The importance of this is that it is on this section of the prophecy that scholars have based much of their claim that Ezekiel was mentally abnormal.

We may now turn to a consideration of other passages. To Hölscher's picture of Ezekiel as a dervish, half-terrible, half-amusing, reference has already been made. He represents Ezekiel as "anything but a quiet and scholarly preacher,"[1] as is shown in Chaps. vii and xxi; his speech was often unintelligible to his audience[2]; it was normally accompanied by violent manifestations, such as groaning (xxi. 11 f.), clapping with his hands and stamping with his feet (vi. 11, xxi. 17, 19).[3] From these gesticulations there is only a step to symbolic actions, which in Ezekiel's case were also of an ecstatic character; he whirls a sword (xxi. 13 ff.); he quakes at the table (xii. 17 ff.); he acts various parts, now Adonai (iv. 1–3, v. 1 f., xxiv. 1 ff.), now the people of Jerusalem (iv. 9 ff., cf. xii. 1 ff., 17 ff.), now the Babylonian king (xxi. 23 ff., xxi. 13 ff.), now the exiles (xxiv. 15 ff.). These actions were omens or prodigies.[4] These manifestations of mania, with torrential and wild speech, accompanied by intermittent

[1] Op. cit., p. 303.
[2] xii. 3 ff., op. cit., p. 303.
[3] Ib.
[4] Ib., p. 304.

catalepsy and hysterical mutism, portray Ezekiel in a light that is not attractive to us, but the evidence should be considered without prejudice.

First, then, Hölscher's contention that Ezekiel was often unintelligible to his hearers is based upon xxi. 6 (EV, xx. 49). The word translated "parables," *meshalim*, may be a little surprising, but there seems no kind of justification for taking it of sayings that are unintelligible. It naturally means parables or similitudes, and the nuance appears to be that the people accuse Ezekiel of being a speaker of images only, not realities.[1] M'fadyen suggests that Ezekiel, being accused of speaking in an allegorical and oracular manner, proposes now to speak with deadly clearness.[2] In any event, Hölscher's interpretation lacks support, for the difficulty of interpreting an allegory is different from that of interpreting the speech of one who is raving; *meshalim* is not the Hebrew for glossolaly.

That Ezekiel was found groaning (xxi. 11 f.; EV, xxi. 6 f.) is clear, and such conduct might be considered strange in a conventional English minister; but there is nothing here that we should be surprised to read of George Fox or of many other Englishmen in days gone by, and such conduct would call for no explanation or apology in the East, except in so far as the cause of the sadness might be sought.

What, then, of the clapping and stamping (vi. 11 and xxi. 17, 19; EV, xxi. 12, 14)? It would be a mistake to under-emphasize the very high tension of these passages. The prophet is to clap and stamp in a kind of dreadful glee; he is to wail and slap his thigh in consternation; he is to clap as signal of

[1] So Davidson and Lofthouse.
[2] Ad loc., apud Peake.

summons to the avenging sword. There need be no doubt in our minds that if his audience had accepted and believed the prophet's message, they would to a man have howled aloud in Oriental fashion, have slapped their thighs and beaten their breasts. It does not therefore become necessary to assume that the prophet was subject to any particular kind of morbid seizure. There is evidence here of great excitement and emotion, but no clear evidence of ecstasy as defined above, where the ecstatic loses all self-control and his body functions automatically.

We come, then, to Hölscher's illustrations of symbolical, ecstatic action. He claims that in ecstasy Ezekiel brandished a sword on the basis of xxi. 13 ff. (EV, xxi. 8 ff.). This truly is not explicitly stated, but it may be implied. In ver. 1 we find a further reference to a sword, so we may assume perhaps that the exiles were not altogether disarmed. Even so, a song accompanied by dramatic action, or even by a sword-dance, would not of itself prove ecstasy or complete lack of control on the dancer's part. But the passage is in various respects obscure. On ver. 14 Lofthouse comments: "The prophet has dropped the sword in ver. 13; now he snatches it again, and twice brandishes it (backwards and forwards) three times over." With Kraetzmar, he reads the text: "Let the sword be doubled and trebled." But this is very difficult. At the beginning of the verse the prophet is told to clap with his hands, and there is no indication that he is to stop clapping and pick up the sword. It is in many ways better, as Rothstein suggests,[1] to omit the word for sword altogether; then the doubling and triplicating will refer to the clapping. The text

[1] Apud Kittel.

of the whole passage is in such confusion that, while it is meaningless as it stands, no correction can be regarded as certain, and no argument based on this passage can be satisfactory.[1] It remains at least quite possible that the true text had nothing of the whirling of the sword. Ezekiel would have been more dangerous than the Gadarene demoniac if in reality he had acted as Hölscher pictures him.

In xii. 17 ff. Ezekiel is bidden eat bread and drink water with trembling and carefulness. This is taken by Hölscher to involve ecstasy, and to Davidson it seemed so unnatural an act that it could never have been performed—an opinion from which his editor, Streane, dissents. The passage is not free from difficulty. It seems generally to be supposed that as bread and water is the food of the beleaguered, Ezekiel is bidden to prepare a special meal and eat in fear and trembling as a sign and warning to the people. There is, however, nothing in the text to suggest the preparation of a special meal; "thy bread" and "thy water" are referred to as if they constituted or represented the ordinary meal, and a needless complication is involved if we suppose that the nature of the food and the manner of its eating are symbols of different things, the one of the being beleaguered, the other of the fear which would be felt under these circumstances. The whole point of the passage seems to lie in the fear or quaking, a symbol of the fear which shall overtake the people when they eat "their bread" (not "bread," as if this were an unusual diet). The notion that a special meal

[1] I tentatively suggest that we should read: weatthah hinnabe'h wehach kaph 'al kaph | uthekappel weshillashtha. This makes good sense and is a good metrical line.

is intended seems to be derived from the first words of ver. 19, as if Ezekiel were to make a special occasion in order to deliver the following oracle ; but I suggest that these clauses are a prose gloss spoiling the poem, and that the poem should read as follows :

Thy bread thou shalt eat with quaking, | and thy water with trembling shalt drink. ||
For their bread they shall eat with fear, | and their water with horror shall drink, ||
To the end that the land shall be waste | from the violence of all them that dwell there. ||

The point is not, therefore, whether a symbolical act was really performed, but whether Ezekiel under stress of emotion did, in fact, on one occasion or more so eat his frugal meal and take the opportunity of pointing a moral to his people.

We may here consider vers. 1–4, where the prophet is bidden to shave his hair and beard and divide it into three parts and destroy them symbolically to show forth his people's fate. Lofthouse seems to believe that the narrative is history in the sense that the prophet actually performed this rite.[1] Skinner holds it " clear that these signs could never have been enacted, either in view of the people or in solitude, as they are here described. It may be doubted whether the whole description is not purely ideal, representing a process which passed through the prophet's mind, or was suggested to him in the visionary state but never actually performed."[2] He adds : " An imaginary symbolic act is as legitimate a literary device as an imaginary conversation. It is absurd to mix up the question of the prophet's truth-

[1] Ad v. 1. [2] Op. cit., p. 65.

fulness with the question whether he did or did not actually do what he conceived himself as doing." That the act as described did not literally take place seems clear, in that one-third of the hair was not to be burned till after the end of the siege and that the burning was to take place " in the midst of the city," which almost certainly must mean Jerusalem. Is it likely that the captives in Babylon would be allowed the free possession and use of swords ? This, then, would appear a fairly clear case of an alleged symbolical act which never was performed. It raises a presumption in our minds as regards other symbolic " acts."

As for the cases cited by Hölscher, where Ezekiel impersonates Adonai or the people or the king, these would not be inconsistent with his thesis, but they in no way require it, and the passages need not be discussed in detail. Once again we should be wise to conclude that Hölscher's picture is far too highly coloured.

We may add that even though we should find that " ecstasy " is the natural explanation of some of Ezekiel's visions and oracles, it would not follow that he normally or necessarily prophesies in this condition. Such sections as the allegory of Aholah and Aholibah in Chap. xxiii, the prophecy against Ammon in xxv. 1–7, are innocent of any suggestion of ecstasy and seem clearly the work of careful and quiet literary composition. The theory of ecstasy is most difficult to maintain in respect of the last section of the book, if its authenticity be accepted.[1]

Of great psychological interest is Ezekiel's inaugural vision recorded in i. 1 ff. For the moment we may

[1] See infra, pp. 215 ff.

leave on one side the question as to the particular condition of abnormal consciousness to which the prophet was subject in this case, for medical psychology has shown clearly that for the purposes of *interpretation*, visions, dreams, poetic phantasies, imaginative drawings are to be treated alike. It therefore does not matter for this purpose in what degree of trance Ezekiel may have been. The vision must be interpreted precisely as if it were a dream, for the symbolism is dream-symbolism. It should be borne in mind that medical psychologists differ greatly in the interpretation of dreams, and in many cases the interpretation is arbitrary and uncertain.[1] At the same time there is general agreement that dreams are significant and that their interpretation, where that is possible, must be through the ideas associated in the patient's mind with the various elements in the dream. No dream can be interpreted where the associations are unknown to us; in a few cases, as in the vision of Peter discussed above,[2] the associations admit of no reasonable doubt. In the present case the same is largely true, for the symbols would seem to be largely reminiscences that we can trace—things seen in the Temple (i. 10 f.), Isaiah's inaugural vision, perhaps the covenant with Abraham (i. 13), the covenant at Sinai (i. 26; Deut. ii. 9). "Ezekiel's mind," says Skinner,[3] "moves freely amongst images stored in his memory, and new combinations are formed which embody a truth not previously apprehended." This is precisely what happens in a dream.

A dream always arises in connection with some

[1] Cf. Hadfield, *Psychology and Morals*, pp. 120 ff., Methuen, 1923.

[2] See supra, p. 30 ff.

[3] Op. cit., p. 30.

mental problem. That Ezekiel, when the vision came to him, was meditating or had been meditating on the problem of the captivity and the spiritual state of his people needs no demonstration. Possibly a strong wind (spirit) was blowing from the north down the road from home; perhaps the whirling and approaching sand was the physical occasion of the trance or vision; but that is mere speculation.

The vision, as we have it, is not a little complicated; this is partly from the nature of the case and partly, it is probable, from the intrusion of a considerable number of glosses. It may be suggested very tentatively that the original poem may have run somewhat as follows [1]:

i. 1. Now it was in the thirtieth year, | the fourth month, the fifth day of the month, ||
And I was with the *golah* | by the river Chebar, | and the heavens were opened, ||
And visions divine I saw, | 3 and the hand of the Lord was upon me. ||
4. And I looked, and behold, | a tempestuous wind | did come from the north, ||
A mighty cloud | with fire interfused | and a brightness about it; ||

[1] It will again be noted that, apart from the omission of what I take to be glosses, almost no liberty has been taken with the text; that, these glosses removed, the text falls into quite regular 3 : 3 or 2 : 2 : 2 metre, with the possible exception of part of i. 16, which seems to be 4 : 2; and that this restored text is both simpler and far more intelligible than the text as it comes to us. The elegancies of translation have been ruthlessly sacrificed to literalness and to an attempt to make clear both the metre of the line and the Hebrew text which I am translating. It is a very remarkable fact—if it be a fact—that, with the removal of phrases which mar or complicate or merely expand the sense, the vision falls into a regular rhythm. This fact, coupled with the intrinsic probability that Ezekiel wrote in verse, may incline some to suppose that this reconstruction may be along right lines, however uncertain in detail.

From its midst as the colour of amber, | 5 and the likeness of four living creatures, ||

6. And four were the faces of each, | and four were the wings of each, ||
7. And straight were their feet, | and their soles were winged, | and they flashed like to brass. ||
8. There were hands of a man | beneath their wings | upon their four sides, ||
9. And their faces turned not as they went, | they went every one straight forward. ||
10. And the face of a man was in front, | and the face of a lion on the right, ||

And the face of an ox on the left, | and the face of an eagle behind, ||

13. The appearance like fiery coals, | like torches asway 'mid the creatures. ||
15. And I saw, and behold, | wheels on the earth | by the side of the creatures, ||
16. The sight of the wheels | like the colour of *tarshish*, | and one was their likeness. ||

And their work was as though a wheel there was | in the midst of a wheel. ||

17. Upon their four sides they went, | and thus they turned not as they went. ||
18. And I saw, and behold, | there were spokes therein | that were full of eyes. ||
19. And behold, as the creatures did go, | the wheels did go by their side; ||

As the creatures did rise | aloft from the earth, | so the wheels did rise. ||

21. They went as these went, | and stood as these stood, | and arose as these rose. ||
22. And the sight o'er the heads of the creatures | like a sky, like the colour of crystal; ||
23. And beneath the sky | their wings were straight | the one toward the other. ||
24. And I heard the sound of their wings | like the voice of many waters. ||
26. And above the sky | like a sapphire stone | as it were a throne, ||
28. Like the sight of the bow | which appears in the cloud | in the day of the rain; ||

Such the sight of the brightness around ; | it was like to the glory of God. ||
And I saw, and I fell on my face, | and I heard a voice that spake. ||

ii. 1. And He said, son of man, | stand up on thy feet, | and with thee will I speak. ||
2. And the Spirit came on me, | set me up on my feet, | and I heard Him that spake. ||
3. And He said unto me, | I am sending thee, | to the house of Israel. ||
4. Thou shalt say unto them, | thus saith the Lord, | though they hear or forbear. ||
6. And of them thou shalt not be afraid, | thou shalt not be dismayed before them, ||
Though briars and thorns be around thee, | though thou dwellest in the midst of scorpions, ||
9. And I saw, behold, | a hand to me stretched, | and in it a scroll, ||
10. And it spread out the scroll 'fore my eyes, | it was written within and without. ||

iii. 1. And He said unto me, son of man, | do thou eat the scroll that thou seest. ||
2. And I opened my mouth, and He fed me, | 3 and it was in my mouth sweet as honey. ||
4. And He said unto me, | son of man, do thou go | to the house of Israel, ||
5. For not to a people | of a speech that is strange | by Me art thou sent. ||
12. And the Spirit upraised me, | and behind me I heard | a sound of great rushing. ||
14. And the Spirit did raise me and take me, | and the Lord's hand was mighty upon me. ||

We may note that, though the description of the theophany is long, the vision itself would seem to have been practically instantaneous, as in a dream ; for i. 28, "When I saw it, I fell upon my face," cannot reasonably be taken to mean, "When I had made a complete inventory of it, I fell upon my face."

The eating of the roll (ii. 8 ff.) is a feat such as may be performed in a dream, and does not seem unnatural or grotesque in a dream. Again, we may note how the vision, like a dream, appears to end suddenly and with the sense of a great noise (iii. 13). There can be no doubt that we must interpret this vision as a genuine vision or dream; the view that Ezekiel deliberately made up this story in order to point a moral for his sermons is psychologically untenable. Lofthouse, who sees that the whole cannot be a mere literary fiction, yet regards the obviously "theological" purpose of some of the details as indications that the whole as described cannot have been exactly seen in trance.[1] But when we remember that we are dealing with dream-symbolism and that the dream derives from a theological problem, the fact that some of the details have a very distinct theological association is very far from being an argument against their having appeared in the vision originally. That Ezekiel when he received this vision was in some sort of trance-state seems in the highest degree probable. T. H. Robinson, Hölscher, Gunkel and other scholars are wholly justified in their protest against the tendency to regard the prophets as staid preachers of doctrine and morality, but their picture of the prophets is a great misrepresentation in the other direction.

Further points of psychological interest occur in respect of the vision or visions recounted in Chaps. viii to x. The sin of Jerusalem, as Lofthouse supposes, is seen by the prophet by some kind of second sight or clairvoyance[2]; that is to say, Ezekiel in dream or vision sees that which is really occurring at a

[1] *Century Bible*, p. 51. [2] Op. cit., p. 95.

distance. We are not required to doubt the fact of clairvoyance as an occasional gift, however inexplicable it still may be. But in respect of most of these chapters it is almost certainly a mistake to think of clairvoyance. It is plain that the destruction narrated in Chaps. ix and x is not seen by clairvoyance, because it did not occur as Ezekiel saw it. It is unlikely that the sinful worship of the elders in the city is seen in clairvoyance for the following reason: it seems possible, for those who have the gift, to see in trance or in the crystal events which are taking place at a distance, but not to participate in them; but in viii. 8 the prophet is told to dig, and he did. Such an action may be performed in dream or vision, but not in clairvoyance. The strongest case for clairvoyance is xi. 13, the statement of the death of Pelatiah. The explanation of this is very difficult. We do well to reject the view that the historical death of Pelatiah, whenever it occurred, suggested the whole prophecy; almost equally unsatisfactory is it to suppose the prophet to see Pelatiah fall dead, though the vision bore no relation to reality. A complete solution is impossible, but the following observations seem in order: It is a mistake to suppose that Chaps. viii to xi are an account of one single vision; the incident of the death of Pelatiah has nothing directly to do with the visions in the three preceding chapters, for the prayer in xi. 13 is very strange if it is supposed to follow the destruction and slaughter depicted in Chaps. ix f. Again, the introduction to the sermon (xi. 5), "The Spirit of Adonai fell upon me," involves that the sermon was preached after the vision and not by imagination in the vision. Moreover, the MSS. vary in xi. 13 between "when I

prophesied " and " according as I prophesied " ; and we are not bound to suppose that Pelatiah's death coincided with the prophecy above nor even that it immediately followed it. On the whole, then, there is no clear evidence for clairvoyance in Ezekiel, but it should be added that the visions recorded in Chaps. viii to x seem to involve hallucinatory elements and very probably some kind of trance. The degree of trance cannot now be ascertained, nor does it matter.

We have not exhausted our material as regards the psychology of the prophet, but we seem in a position to come to some kind of tentative conclusion. Certain oracles would seem to be the outcome of very great excitement and emotional disturbance, as, for instance, in Chaps. vii and xxi. Other passages, again, appear to show signs of careful, skilful, laboured compilation, such, for instance, as the parable of Oholah and Oholibah and the image of the ship of Tyre. That the so-called symbolical actions were sometimes, if not always, performed we can well believe ; they may have been enacted as many of the oracles were spoken, in great excitement, but they do not imply anything like mental derangement in the prophet. The prophets would appear occasionally, if in most cases not normally, to have experienced visions with hallucinatory symptoms, which, although doubtless edited and revised, are not mere literary exercises cast into the form of visions. So far as we can judge by language and form, some of the oracles would seem to have come from some kind of trance state ; in the case of others there is no trace of this. So far as subject-matter is concerned, no difference of teaching is to be detected between visions extraordinary and revelations " ordinary." The greatness and significance of Ezekiel, as

of the other prophets, will be found to lie in what he taught and what he was. There is truth in Gunkel's contention that only men themselves akin to the prophets can understand them or interpret them.[1] When it is said in iii. 15 that Ezekiel remained seven days dismayed, this will seem psychopathic and morbid to those who have never glimpsed the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God.

[1] *Die Schriften des alten Testaments*, 2 Abteil., 2 Band, p. xxviii.

CHAPTER II

ELIJAH

If, as some scholars suppose, Elijah was one of the greatest figures in Hebrew history and virtually the second founder of the Hebrew religion, it is very necessary that these studies should start from Elijah; indeed, on any showing, our interpretation, or at the least our appreciation, of the work and teaching of Amos and his successors depends upon the view we take of the work and ministry of Elijah. But in this and the following studies we must so far as possible guard against that *circulus vitiosus* into which arguments upon the religion of Israel are apt to be involved. Our interpretation of Amos must be largely coloured by our reconstruction of the figure of Elijah. At the same time one of the means of interpreting Elijah's work and teaching is the argument backwards from what we find in the teaching of the later prophets. This is inevitable, and it is a difficulty from which we shall never be quit. All reconstructions must be tentative, and dogmatic statements will be out of place. In the last resort all that can be claimed for a reconstruction is that it lays due weight upon all the best ascertained facts, and that it gives a consistent and intelligible picture of a large stretch of Hebrew history. This test rules out many reconstructions which in any particular detail are legiti-

mate enough. Thus some approach the text with so devastating a scepticism that they give no intelligible account of that religion which we undoubtedly find at the end of the period ; more conservative scholars, anxious to believe everything which they are not bound to disbelieve, give us a picture of the prophets so confused and internally inconsistent as to be no credible picture at all. In criticizing such views, however, from the point of view of inconsistency, we must beware of supposing that the Hebrew prophets were primarily logical thinkers or systematic theologians.

While it seems necessary to begin our enquiries with Elijah, it is unfortunate that we must start with narratives so far removed as are the Elijah sagas from the realm of scientific history. The stories of Elijah abound in legendary traits, miracles, impossibilities and inconsistencies, and scholars take the most divergent views as to their general worth and reliability. Some, as Hölscher,[1] regard Elijah as a figure so obscured by legend and tradition that nothing with certainty can be alleged of him ; others regard him as a mere primitive rainmaker ; others again, as Addis [2] and, more critically, Gressmann,[3] consider him as one of the greatest figures in Hebrew history, second only to Moses himself.

That Elijah is not a purely legendary figure is indicated by reference to two incidents in the sagas which can, within limits, be dated ; the first is the introduction of the Tyrian Baal under the influence of Jezebel, the other the despotic pretensions of the

[1] *Geschichte der isr. u. jüd. Religion*, p. 95. Töpelmann, 1922. *Enc. Bib.*, art. "Elijah."
[3] *Schriften des alt. Test.*, I, ii, p. 270.

king connected in the story with the murder of Naboth.[1] A fairly certain fact about the period also is that Ahab was not, as some of the Elijah stories represent, a conscious apostate from Yahweh. The names of two of his sons are compounded with Yah, and there is no good reason for doubting the authenticity of the story of the four hundred Yahweh prophets who at the end of his reign were officially called upon to prophecy before him. On that occasion the true prophet of Yahweh is Micaiah ben Imlah, and it is at least noticeable that Elijah is not mentioned in the narrative. Moreover, it would appear from 2 Kings i. 6 that Elijah, though known to the king, was not known to the ordinary person at court, although, according to the familiar narrative, he has come before the whole nation as the champion of Yahweh, a familiar figure of awe and wonder.

Three questions in particular fall to be considered: (1) What was the ground and nature of Elijah's controversy with Ahab? (2) What was the significance of the scene on Carmel, if we are able to regard it as historical? And (3) What is the true interpretation of the scene on Mount Horeb? Naturally these questions in large measure all hang together.

1. Elijah is represented as calling upon the nation to choose between Yahweh and Baal. What are we to understand here by Baal? Three possible answers might be given: (*a*) the Tyrian baal; (*b*) the local baalim, presumably regarded as manifestations of one baal; or (*c*) conceivably the worship of Yahweh under the forms of the old Canaanite cultus.

(*a*) Ahab's marriage with Jezebel was presumably dictated by the political situation and the importance

[1] See Gressmann, *S.A.T.*, II, i, p. 272.

of an alliance with Tyre. Ahab built a chapel to Melkart of Tyre for his queen (2 Kings x. 27). Moreover, an alliance between Israel and Tyre would involve that Ahab must do homage to Melkart. "It was impossible to have friendship and alliance with other peoples if their gods were proscribed in Israel's land."[1] But this would not be thought to involve on Ahab's part any conscious infidelity to Yahweh. It can, I think, be shown that the fierce "jealousy" of Yahweh, his demand that thou shalt worship none other gods beside me, was a vital part of the religion and institution of Moses; there is therefore no *a priori* difficulty in supposing that Elijah should protest against the practice at Ahab's court. This protest, therefore, we are at liberty to regard as a fact, or at least as a probability. But there can never have been any possibility that Israel as a nation would worship the Tyrian baal. The worship of Melkart of Tyre in Samaria for political and military purposes is credible; but Israel as a whole was an agricultural country, and Melkart of Tyre was a city god. It is almost inconceivable that there was danger lest the worship at Israel's high places should be offered to the Tyrian god. If Elijah's quarrel with Ahab concerned the chapel and worship of Melkart alone, the controversy was less than the issue of national apostasy as represented in the sagas.[2]

(*b*) Did, then, Elijah come forward at a time when there was real danger lest the people should relapse

[1] Robertson Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, p. 80.

[2] It is, of course, possible that Ahab adopted the equation, Yahweh = Melkart. But there is no evidence and no probability on the side of the supposition that the nation as a whole was learning to worship Yahweh-Melkart; and even this would be a false worship of Yahweh, not the worship of another god, as contemplated by the narratives *as we have them*.

into heathenism in the form of the worship of the old baalim of Canaan? This is not intrinsically impossible, but it would involve, if accepted as a theory, a very great revision of the picture of the religion and life of Israel from the time of David. David's prayer was (1 Sam. xxvi. 19 f.) that he might not be driven out of Yahweh's land and so forced to serve other gods. This involves that Canaan was Yahweh's land and that he was regarded as baal of Canaan. There is no Hebrew tradition that any god but Yahweh was worshipped between David and Ahab in Israel. The high places of the Canaanite baalim had been taken over for the worship of Yahweh, as we see in the story of Samuel at Ramah, and however little difference in cultus and idea there may have been between the worship of Yahweh and the worship of the older baalim at the high places, it is generally agreed, on the basis of all the available evidence, that the worship of the baalim had ceased in Israel for centuries, though one could not deny the possibility that here and there Canaanite enclaves might have persisted with the old worship and old gods.[1] To suppose, therefore, that at the time of

[1] The problem is undoubtedly complicated by the discovery of the (apparent) worship of 'Anath, Herem and Ishum at Elephantine, in the temple of Yaho. The matter is very obscure, but it seems fairly clear that it was a question of accretions to the worship of Yahweh or Yaho, not of any "halting between two opinions" nor of any conscious disloyalty to Yahweh.

We are told (1 Kings xi. 5) that Solomon erected on the Mount of Olives a high place for 'Ashtart, the Canaanite and Phœnician goddess; this was not destroyed, it would appear, till the time of Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 13). Ahab also seems to have revived or encouraged the worship of 'Ashtart in Ephraim (1 Kings xvi. 33). This is important as indicating the religious outlook of the king, but 'Ashtart cannot be styled "Baal." It is certain that if the worship of 'Ashtart was prevalent in Ahab's day, the conception of Yahweh will, in fact, have been little nobler than that of Melkart, and that from the point of view of Mosaism the current worship

Elijah there was danger of a sudden relapse to frank baalism, which had been laid aside for centuries, would be absurd. Moreover, in the Elijah stories as we have them, although in a few places Elijah charges Ahab with following the baalim, the charge against him in general is that of following Baal in the singular. What could Israel have understood by the term? That it might refer to Melkart of Tyre is obvious, but could it be used of the local baalim (regarded as different manifestations of one single deity called Baal) absolutely? The evidence for such usage is not strong,[1] and, even if we accept the suggestion that in earlier days, before the advent of Israel, there had been a tendency towards monotheism amongst the more spiritually minded in Canaan, there is no shred of evidence for the persistence of a higher cult of Baal in Palestine during the period covered by the books of Samuel and Kings. We may safely say that such a thing was virtually impossible after the conquest of the country and the subjugation of the Canaanites. These Elijah stories do not come from a period centuries after the events which they record, and there was no later period before the exile when, to the best of our knowledge, Baal could stand for a deity manifested in the various baalim. That Baal is a single deity is clear from the Carmel story ("peradventure he sleepeth"), and although it is natural and tempting to suggest that in the time of the drought there was a popular movement to relapse to the worship of the old baalim as the givers of fertility,

of Yahweh was mere heathenism. It is, moreover, intrinsically likely that Yahweh was normally worshipped under the name of "Baal" in all those rites which Israel had taken over from the Canaanites—that is, in by far the larger part of the national cultus.

[1] See Hastings, *E.R.E.*, art. "Baal."

the use of the term Baal is really decisive against this interpretation.

(*c*) Is it possible, then, that by Baal Elijah means the worship of Yahweh under the forms of the ancient Canaanitish cults? It seems at first difficult to suppose that at the scene on Mount Carmel both sides were invoking Yahweh, yet this possibility cannot be ruled out *a priori*. Thus Addis says that to Elijah "Yahweh and Baal represented two principles—viz. the worship of national righteousness and the sensual worship of Nature."[1] There are many indications that the reform of Elijah was an attempt to win the king and people back to the religion of Moses.[2] Elijah, according to the story, would seem to repair to that cave on Horeb where once Moses had seen the Lord.[3] Elijah, though he is not at one in all points with the Rechabites (for to him Yahweh is in some sense an agricultural deity as the giver of rain), yet represents the nomadic religion, and in his zeal for the absolute sovereignty and the sole worship of Yahweh he forcibly reminds us of the religious foundation of Moses.

No theoretical objection can be taken to the view that Elijah was a reformer who went back to Moses as Luther to Paul. This supposition explains Elijah's hostility to Ahab's chapel to Melkart and his call to the people as a whole to make up their minds whom they will serve. If on this hypothesis we can make an intelligible picture of the work of Elijah, and if no strong argument to the contrary can be adduced, this will be a likely and probable hypothesis which,

[1] *Enc. Bib.*, col. 1273; cf. Gressmann, *S.A.T.*, II, i, p. 265.
[2] So Gressmann, *S.A.T.*, II, i, p. 270.
[3] Gressmann, ib., p. 267.

as we shall see, is of great importance in estimating the work of Elijah's successors.

2. We may turn, then, to our second problem, on which we have already touched, the significance of the scene on Mount Carmel. In this story there is much that is bewildering and difficult, but the main point of the story is intrinsically credible. There has been a prolonged drought, a drought which appears to be independently attested; the sacrifice on Mount Carmel is connected with the ending of the drought and the bringing of rain. The unity of the story is broken by the miraculous descent of the heavenly fire. This element it would be reasonable to view as the pious addition of an editor who did not understand why Elijah should prescribe that the sacrifice should be without fire and why he soused the altar with water. The latter was presumably a rite originally connected with ideas of primitive sympathetic magic for the production of rain, and the former may be due to the fact that in primitive wilderness sacrifices the altar was not yet a hearth. But it should be said that the rigours of the drought would appear to have been somewhat exaggerated if water in such quantities was readily available on Mount Carmel. Possibly all these elements are secondary. Who, then, were the Baal prophets on Mount Carmel? There is nothing intrinsically impossible in the statement that there were prophets of Melkart in Samaria who ate at Jezebel's table[1]; moreover, Mount Carmel would appear to have been a sacred place for Tyrians as well as Israelites from time immemorial. But it is more than difficult to suppose that Elijah challenged the prophets of the city-god of Tyre to meet him on

[1] See Gressmann, op. cit., p. 264.

Mount Carmel to test whether their god could cause rain to fall in Palestine. No one can have supposed that Melkart of Tyre had anything to do with agriculture in Palestine. The Baal prophets, then, can scarcely have been the prophets of Melkart, god of Tyre. Equally certainly they were not the prophets of the local baalim; for in the first place there is no other evidence that Canaanitish worship of the baalim was organized in Israel as a rival to the worship of Yahweh; in the second place it is inconceivable that the prophets of the local baalim, if there were such, would have invoked their baalim to cause rain anywhere but in their own small locality; they could never have gathered at Mount Carmel to invoke their gods. There is no trace whatever of an organized or even of an existent worship in Palestine of the one god Baal, with or without his prophets. If the Baal prophets, therefore, were present at all, they must have been Yahweh prophets, whose worship was after the manner of the ancient Canaanite rites, and who, as we can readily believe, worshipped Yahweh under the name of Baal.[1] It may be readily admitted that the author of the story, as we have it, certainly supposed that these prophets worshipped another god than Yahweh; but as a matter of fact the extirpation of the prophets of Baal, however we interpret Baal, would seem to have been the work of Elisha and Jehu,[2] and the massacre of the Baal prophets is seen to be a secondary element because it is said to have preceded the rainstorm, though it was not till the storm-cloud appeared on the horizon that the prophet Elijah was, in fact, vindicated. The massacre of the Baal prophets, then, must be eliminated with the

[1] Cf. Hosea, ii. 16.

[2] See 2 Kings x. 18 ff.

descent of the heavenly fire. Perhaps the presence, as well as the death, of the Baal prophets on Mount Carmel should be treated as secondary. It is true that Elijah might have challened them to bring down the rain by invoking Yahweh after their usual fashion, and that in the crying and gashing and frantic dancing we have an illustration of that Yahweh worship against which Elijah, in the spirit of Moses, protested; but possibly, and rather less probably as I suppose, the presence of opponents on Mount Carmel may be later additions to enhance the miracle and glorify the memory of Elijah.

3. Finally we come to the question of the revelation on Mount Horeb. In the narratives, as we have them, the Horeb scene is closely connected with the scene on Mount Carmel, and a psychological explanation of Elijah's sudden change of mood from triumph to despair is therefore offered by commentators and preachers. This psychological explanation we impose upon the text but cannot derive from it. In any event we must take the Horeb story as it stands and then judge of its relationship with the scene on Mount Carmel. We must certainly first approach the story on the supposition that it has some historical foundation and is not a mere pious invention. If in any degree true, the story must ultimately be derived from Elijah himself, who alone was present. What is its significance? As ordinarily interpreted it bears no clear sense. The traditional interpretation is to the effect that after his great victory on Mount Carmel, Elijah, partly in fear of Jezebel and partly in acute reaction from his previous exaltation, flees south to Horeb, and there apprehends God, not in storm, earthquake and eruption, but in the "still small

voice." This voice is normally interpreted as the voice of personal and spiritual religion. God, it is suggested, spoke to his heart through *conscience* and in *gentleness*, as opposed to the prophet's violence, and for his *comfort*. But already we have three not very consistent interpretations, for conscience and gentleness and comfort are not by any means identical.

The tradition that Elijah was depressed, asking for death, comes from the narrative as we have it.[1] It is possible that the editor connected the depression with a reaction after the victory on Carmel, but he says nothing of such a connection, nor does Elijah's complaint that he is no better than his fathers well suit such a context. If for the moment we forget the theory that this scene follows that on Carmel, we should say that his complaint that he is no better than his fathers suits, if indeed it does not necessitate, the view that Elijah realized himself to be entrusted with a mission too great for mortal man. In this case his "depression" would be like to that of Jeremiah, who knew himself to be but a child.[2] It is perhaps worth suggesting that we may conceivably have here a misplaced account of the inaugural vision of Elijah's ministry.

We turn then to the vision itself, with its majestic setting. Aloft on Horeb, Elijah experiences the hurricane and hears the rocks dislodged tumbling into the valleys below. After the hurricane comes the earthquake, and the everlasting hills are shaken and dissolve. The earthquake is followed by the eruption, and after the eruption comes the "voice of thin silence." The whole scene seems to represent the "passing by" of God,[3] and the meaning appears to

[1] 1 Kings xix. 4. [2] Jer. i. 6. [3] 1 Kings xix. 11.

be that not till the silence did the prophet hear the word of God. God spoke to him in the silence. But what did God then say? Was it some incommunicable message of comfort or spiritual theology? It is indeed often supposed by us that a sense of blank awe, wonder, blind emotion, mysterious silence is a state with which religion is concerned. In reality it is a relapse to the primitive. Both religion and historical sense should lead us to see that Elijah did not ascend Horeb to enter into a coma-like state of trance without intellectual and rational significance. If, as some suppose, Elijah was led to see that the way of fire and wrath and violence is not God's way, we can only reply that there is no indication in the text nor in the later conduct of Elijah that he received any such revelation, and such a view is flatly contradicted by the succeeding words.[1]

The only rational and unstrained interpretation must be based on the assumption that the silence itself is the message.[2] God causes hurricane and earthquake and eruption, and his word comes to the prophet, when these have done their work, in the absolute silence of the waste desert. God will destroy —what? The sequel (vers. 15 ff.) makes it likely that civilization itself will be destroyed. But these verses are themselves not free from grave obscurities.

Hitherto we have considered this chapter as if it were a unity, but clearly that is not the case. We have two accounts here of the Horeb experience, as may be most clearly seen by a comparison of ver. 11a, where Elijah is bidden go forth from the cave to see

[1] 1 Kings xix. 15 ff.

[2] See Oman, *The Paradox of the World*, pp. 15 ff. Cambridge University Press. Cf. Gressmann, *S.A.T.*, II, i, p. 268.

the "passing by" of the Lord, with ver. 13a, which indicates that not till after the theophany did Elijah come forth from the cave.[1] The two accounts have been stitched together by the hand of the editor, and to unravel them exactly is very difficult, and interpretations vary according to their author's reconstruction of the nature of the Baal-worship against which Elijah protested. It seems, however, natural to separate the two stories A and B thus: Both are introduced by the words of ver. 9, "And he came thither unto a cave and sojourned there, and the word of Yahweh was to him." Then A continues with an account of the theophany in the hurricane and earthquake and eruption in vers. 11 and 12. The B account continues vers. 13 f. The last words of ver. 9 and the whole of ver. 10 belongs to the B story, but they are out of place and are repeated in their proper place in vers. 13 and 14. The problem is as to whether these two accounts are inconsistent with one another, which of them in that case is the more authentic, and to which, if to either, do vers. 15 ff. belong. In the B narrative Elijah is represented as being in despair; he is alone, and his work is a failure. We note, however, that the throwing down of the altars of Yahweh and the slaughter of his prophets with the sword implies, or seems to imply, an apostasy from Yahweh on the part of the people; but we have seen that Ahab was not a conscious apostate, and that the scene on Carmel, if the Baal prophets were there at all, was more probably a contest between two ways of worshipping Yahweh. It may be noted in passing that this complaint that Yahweh's prophets

[1] Cf. Wellhausen, *Composition des Hexateuchs*, ed. 3, p. 280, n. Berlin, 1899.

have been slaughtered comes very strangely as the sequel to the Carmel story as we have it, for Elijah is supposed to come to Horeb straight from the slaughtering of the Baal prophets.

The conclusion of the B narrative might well be the substance of ver. 18, with its assurance that he was not alone, but that there were still seven thousand of the faithful in Israel. In this case the kissing of Baa would refer to the kissing of Yahweh images of Canaanite origin. The religion of Moses had a cultus without images; but probably the verse is a gloss by the editor, who misunderstood the nature of the controversy. In view of earlier discussions, we can only make sense of Elijah's complaint, as recorded in the B narrative, on the assumption, for which there is no evidence, that there had been a fierce persecution of some of the Yahweh worshippers by the king or by the other Yahweh worshippers. It is, of course, quite possible that the king would persecute those who in the name of Yahweh protested against his queen's chapel, and this may be the basis of the story of Jezebel's persecution of the Yahweh prophets. Thus it is not suggested that there may be no historical basis for the B narrative, but, as we have it, it is the work of the compiler, who clearly misunderstood the real situation in that he visualized Ahab as a conscious apostate and the nation as in danger of frankly worshipping some god other than Yahweh.

We turn to the A narrative of the theophany. Buttenwieser's comment on it is singularly inept [1]; he thinks it the work of a later author "imbued with the prophetic idea of revelation—for him God reveals Himself, not in the phenomena of Nature, . . . but

[1] *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 161, n. 1.

in the still small voice." But is "the still small voice" (or, as Burney translates it,[1] "the sound of a light whisper") the prophetic idea of revelation? The voice of the Lord is compared by Amos to the roaring of a lion (iii. 8); the Lord's word to Jeremiah is like a fire in his bones. The truth is that we are almost bound to interpret the silent voice as the silence of the desert waste; and although it would be hazardous to assert that no one at any later age could have invented this story and ascribed it to Elijah, there is absolutely no justification for such a supposition; the vision and the message are exactly in keeping with the picture of Elijah as protagonist and protestant of the religion of Moses. He sees the Canaanitish civilization of Israel come down in ruins. The thin voice of silence is a word of doom. It may perhaps also be a word of hope if Elijah thought that in the desert, as once before, Israel should find her God. Vers. 15–17, therefore, are in the main an intelligible sequel to the theophany, explaining its meaning. But we dare not affirm that these verses express at all literally the ideas conveyed to Elijah's mind; it is difficult not to think that stories of Elijah and Elisha are here confused. We may take them, if we will, as being in their present form the work of an editor who interprets, rightly or wrongly, the end of civilization as destined to come through foreign war and civil and religious strife at home. It is naturally not possible to prove that vers. 11 and 12 come to us, as it were, from the lips of Elijah himself, but a needless scepticism is not helpful, and if, as we shall see, this vision fits exactly

[1] *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Kings*, p. 231. Oxford University Press, 1903.

into the picture of Elijah as the prophet of the religion of Moses, we have all the proofs of authenticity which the nature of the case allows.

The question may be asked whether we are to suppose that literally Elijah beheld on the heights of Horeb the destruction wrought by hurricane, earthquake and eruption. It may have been so. The exact location of Horeb-Sinai, the mountain that burned with fire, is not known to us; but natural phenomena of this kind seem clearly to underlie and to explain the Hebrew traditions of the Exodus,[1] and we must admit the possibility that in these verses we have a record of fact. At the same time it is by no means necessary to make this assumption. The Oriental mind turns naturally to parable and imagery, and we may go so far as to say that if Elijah, steeped in the traditions of Moses, had received an inward admonition of judgment to come and utter destruction, it is in just such language as this that we should expect his ideas to have been clothed. It is therefore reasonable, but not necessary, to suppose that we have here the account of an inward experience, possibly with hallucinatory accompaniments, rather than of facts which literally and actually occurred at a particular moment round Mount Horeb.

Is it, then, civilization itself that is to be destroyed? And, if so, why? Duhm supposes that Elijah only foretold the destruction of the house of Ahab.[2] If, on other grounds, we had come to the conclusion that the protest and testimony of Elijah was solely against the royal house, this would be a natural interpretation; and yet if this is all that the story intends,

[1] See Gressmann, *Mose und seine Zeit.*
[2] *Theologie der Propheten*, ed. 1, p. 109.

the overthrow of an Israelite dynasty, it would seem somewhat of a *βάθος*.

If this is the meaning, there is no very close connection between the symbolism of the natural cataclysm and the political revolution. It would be more in keeping with the solemnity of the scene to suppose that the destruction of the whole world and its reduction to primitive chaos were in the picture, and it is indeed the contention of some scholars that an eschatology of darkness after this fashion was part of Israel's intellectual current coin. But such an eschatology certainly cannot in reason be inferred from this passage. In the first place the editor who appended vers. 15–17 certainly looked to a national, not a universal, judgment; in the second place the only extant story of universal ruin which we have any right to assume as familiar in Israel in these days was the Flood, but in this passage the imagery is not taken from the Flood, but from the stories of the Exodus; and in the third place, if it can be shown that the cause of the coming destruction is the sin of Israel, it is to be assumed, unless there is clear proof to the contrary, that the destruction is to be of Israel only.[1]

If we take the theophany to predict the doom of civilization, then the cause of this must lie deeper than Elijah's quarrel with Ahab concerning the chapel of Melkart in Samaria. Do we find, then, the clue in the story of Naboth? The essence of this story must be regarded as certainly historical, the more so because we have a later reference to it from another source in 2 Kings ix. 25 ff. The king, under the

[1] The possibility of Israel's destruction is contemplated both in J and E.

influence of Jezebel, is seen trampling upon the ancient rights of his people; Elijah champions the ancestral rights of the people against the haughty pretences of a court desiring to become despotic. It might perhaps be fair to suppose that the murder of Naboth was but an instance of that expropriation with violence to which the old yeomen of Israel were being subjected by the ruling classes at the court. This, however, must be uncertain. Moreover, if Elijah grasped the essential incompatibility of the new ideas taken over from the Canaanites with the original worship of the God of Israel, we should have clear evidence why he predicted the doom of civilization.

The objection to this view comes in the main from those who are disposed to deny that we have any knowledge of the Mosaic dispensation and that there were to be found any advanced ethical or religious ideas in Israel prior to the prophet Amos. It is not possible to answer this contention in full within the scope of these studies; a partial answer will be the implications of the religion of the prophets as we shall expound it, but I believe that sound exegesis and historical criticism reveals the following points as essential elements in the Mosaic religious institutions: first, an idea of the absolute and exclusive claims of Yahweh upon his people ("Yahweh, thy God, is a jealous God: thou shalt have none other gods beside Me"); second, a sense of Yahweh's grace in the deliverance and choice of Israel ("We love Him because He first loved us"); third, the conviction that Yahweh was a God of righteousness; fourth, a cultus uncontaminated by the impurities and licentiousness of the fertility cults of Canaan. All these elements are implied or stated by the pre-exilic writings of the

prophets. If the Mosaic foundation were not of this sort, it is difficult or impossible to give a rational account of Israel's post-Mosaic history. These elements are not obscurely discovered by the historical method from Israel's own traditions of the Mosaic period, and only on some such supposition can we give verisimilitude to the picture of Elijah and his work. Elijah arises in the spirit and power of Moses to call back Israel to the old ways and its true religion. This supposition renders clear and intelligible the place of Elijah in the history of Israel. There are, accordingly, three counts in his indictment of his times: first, the chapel to Melkart in Samaria, which is an affront to the sole sovereignty of the God of Israel; second, the oppression of the court, which involves despite done to the righteousness of Yahweh; third, a false and demoralized cultus. It is by no mistake and misunderstanding that Moses and Elijah are coupled together in the New Testament.

One of the ideas now dominant in Old Testament study is that there were current in Israel from the pre-prophetic period two sets of eschatological ideas, the one of hope, the other of doom. These eschatologies are derived by some scholars from Mesopotamia, by others from Egypt, and the function of the great prophets of Israel is commonly regarded as that of deepening and spiritualizing the current and traditional eschatologies, whether of weal or of woe. We shall in the course of these studies be able in measure to appraise this view, but the following considerations are already in point. In the first place, expectation and eager anticipation of "a good time coming," a day of bliss, prosperity and comfort which was the phantasy construction of the "false"

prophets, may possibly have been derived in respect of its particular details from foreign sources; but such ideas might arise in any nation at any time by a normal psychological process; they are wish-fulfilments which phantasy projects upon the future.[1] We may call them eschatological ideas in that they concerned a period in the future at the end of the age; it may be doubtful whether they can be called an eschatology, if by that is meant dogma in any way systematized. We shall see in what sense these were adopted by the great prophets.

With regard to the woe-eschatology, the case, psychologically considered, is not so clear. Gressmann has exhaustively studied the traces and origins of these ideas.[2] The fairly certain upshot of his discussions seems to be this: that Yahweh was sometimes regarded as the storm-god, the god of the sirocco, of pestilence, of the volcano, and of other devastating natural events. How far these attributes may have originally belonged to the God of the Midianites at Sinai, and how far they may have pertained to Palestinian demons whose qualities had been assumed by Yahweh in the process called syncretism, is a question irrelevant at the moment. Nature gods are always capricious, and the fear of the god of the east wind or the pestilence would at certain times or in the minds of certain people naturally lead to the terror of some fearful and devastating explosion of capricious wrath on the deity's part. There can have been little unified thinking about the attributes of God in the early days of Israel in Canaan, partly because the Hebrews were not a metaphysically minded people, partly

[1] See supra, pp. 42 ff.
[2] *Ursprung der Isr.-jüd. Eschatologie.*

because the adjustment of thought to new conditions in Palestine and the conquest of the Canaanite baalim by Yahweh would inevitably involve for many years a certain chaos of religious ideas. We may not legitimately assume that there was any sort of systematized eschatology of woe in Israel, but there would seem to have been current various eschatological ideas popularly familiar which in some cases at least afforded the framework or symbolism employed by the great prophets. If we find traces of an expectation of world destruction or of world beatification in pre-exilic Israel, it is natural and proper to look for the roots of this in primitive myth. We may suppose, then, with good reason, that current eschatological ideas were available to provide the prophets with an intelligent symbolism. "Eschatology," says Gressmann, "provides the technique; the prophet provides the melody."[1] It is very important to lay stress upon this, for we shall see clearly that, so far as religion is concerned, the eschatology of the great prophets has nothing to do with the phantasy dreams of the false prophet so-called, and nothing to do with the idea of capricious explosions of anger by a Nature god. The discovery of current eschatological ideas of weal and woe has detrimentally affected the understanding of the prophets. It has often been thought that a passage from the prophets was explained when it was alleged to have been an idea taken over from current eschatology; the prophet is thus often made the victim of primitive ideas which a more realistic age such as our own must transcend. We seem thus delivered from the necessity of asking further whether the contentions of the prophets are as true as they are

[1] Op. cit., p. 152.

disquieting to those who take them seriously. We shall see that there is, in fact, as little connection between the great prophets and the current eschatology of woe as between them and the false prophets of weal. When the ethical element is made primary, we have *μετάβασις εἰς ἀλλὸ γένος*. The great prophets, as we shall see, take over nothing but the symbolism from this primitive religion. The current eschatological ideas represented the hopes and fears of men with no clear religious principle ; the prophets take their symbolism to express their message about the fundamental laws and meaning of history and of the world.

CHAPTER III

AMOS

An enquiry into a prophet's outlook upon the future is one of the quickest and surest roads to the heart of his message. This chapter, then, is concerned with the " eschatology " of Amos. Strictly, the term " eschatology " means a theory of " the Last Things," and its use here prejudges the question at issue ; we may, for instance, find that Amos is concerned about the *next* things and not at all about the *last* things, but in view of current discussions it is convenient to allow ourselves the use of the term " eschatology " to cover any outlook upon the future which includes the expectation of a coming catastrophe that in some degree must mark the end of an epoch, if not of " the end of the world." Indeed, all immediately expected acts of God in Nature and world history tend to be called " eschatological " concepts.

(1) We must first ask, to whom were Amos's prophecies addressed, to both kingdoms, or to the northern only, or sometimes to one and sometimes to both ? Important issues hang upon this point. Amos, says Smend,[1] only refers to Judah, as it were, in parenthesis, so certain was it to him that Judah would perish with, Israel. The references given by Smend in support of this are vi. 11 ; vii. 9, 16. But it is eminently doubt-

[1] *Alttest. rel. Gesch.*, p. 181 n.

ful whether these refer to Judah at all.[1] The phrase in iii. 1, " the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt," has been taken to support the view that Amos included Judah in his message. But the words come from a prose introduction to the following oracle; they are therefore probably the work of the editor or compiler of the book. There is general agreement that ii. 4 f., with its vague denunciation of Judah, is a gloss, and the reference in vi. 1 to Zion cannot be right, for the oracle is clearly directed against Samaria and the northern kingdom. Smend's argument that, as a matter of course, Judah was included in the denunciation of Israel cannot stand.

In respect of certain oracles there naturally can be no proof that Amos cannot have included Judah in his thought; indeed, Beersheba, against which he warns Israel, was in Judean territory.[2] But there can be no question that his prophecy as a whole is directed against Israel alone. In the following passages Judah is definitely excluded: iii. 9; iv. 1; v. 6, 15; vi. 6, 14; ix. 1 ff. Again, Amaziah's taunt in vii. 12 seems to imply that Amos's prophesying might be acceptable in Judah, and possibly even that Amaziah took him to be an unofficial emissary from Judah. The argument that Judah is referred to in iii. 12 as " two legs or the flap of an ear " is worthless, for the verse refers explicitly to Samaria.

Practically all modern scholarship till quite recent years was unanimous in the assertion that ix. 8–15

[1] " The great house and the little house " means all houses great and small. " Isaac " *might* cover Judah, but the context seems to restrict it to Israel alone.

[2] It is to be noted, however, that Amos says nothing of the destruction of Beersheba, as he does of Bethel and Gilgal.

is a later addition. Wellhausen's comment is that Amos could not suddenly have made milk and honey flow out of the flagon of the wrath of Yahweh. But certain modern scholars, notably Gressmann and Sellin, defend the authenticity of these verses in whole or part. Sellin makes the interesting suggestion that the words are addressed to Amaziah.[1] Thus he supposes that in these verses we have implicitly Amos's judgment upon Judah.

This recent restoration of the passage is based upon a principle of the utmost significance in the interpretation of prophecy. Gressmann says "world-renewal necessarily follows upon world-catastrophe."[2] Sellin likewise assumes that Amos took over (and to some extent transfigured or at least modified) current eschatological ideas. Once again it may, and, I think, it must, be admitted that in all probability there were current in Israel eschatological ideas both of weal and woe, and that these often afforded their imagery to the prophets. There would seem to have been more or less vague ideas of a universal flood or of the destruction of the country through earthquake or pestilence or the sirocco or other calamity, and conversely of the restoration of a golden paradisaic age, or of a divine epiphany in judgment on the national enemies. It is also likely, as we have seen, that, quite apart from any mythical basis, there would be phantasy expectations of a good time coming. What is totally unproved is that there was any systematized eschatology, and that the prophets who took over the symbolism of the coming woes in order to describe or picture the judgments of the living God must

[1] *Das Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 224, 1922.
[2] *S.A.T.*, II, i, p. 356.

automatically have adopted also the expectations of the return of paradise. It seems evident that the "false" prophets who proclaimed that the Day of Adonai would be light had not adopted the ideas of the "woe-eschatology"; it is not clear, therefore, why the "true" prophets must, as is so constantly assumed, have adopted the eschatological ideas of their opponents. Did Amos at the end of his message really assert that the Day of Adonai, as his opponents alleged, would prove to be a Day of light? Indeed, Gressmann himself has shown that the elements of the current eschatological ideas were exceedingly varied. There can have been no unified dogma of a weal- or of a woe-eschatology, still less an amalgam of both!

The eschatological ideas employed by Amos are said by Gressmann to be those of *world*-catastrophe and *world*-renewal.[1] He cites viii. 4–14, but this passage has nothing to do with world-catastrophe. The imagery of earthquake, eclipse and famine is used, but that these are limited to the sinful land is indicated (1) by the fact that the sins for which the punishment is sent are those of Israel; (2) by the result—Israel's feasts are to be turned into mourning; (3) by the seeking for the words of *Yahweh*; (4) by the phrase "from sea to sea and from north to east," which is a way of indicating the four quarters of Palestine.[2]

No world-catastrophe and no world-renewal is contemplated by Amos. The supposition that the promises of weal are limited to Judah is less extrava-

[1] Op. cit., p. 352.

[2] The Assyrian menace is not a world-catastrophe in any strictly eschatological sense; in the *political* sense Amos i. 3 to ii. 8 implies something like a world-catastrophe. See Duhm, *Israels Propheten*, p. 89, ed. 2.

gant, but scholars often fail to realize the spiritual significance of their contentions in this field. It would be very generally agreed that to whatever extent Amos adopted the language of the current woe-eschatology, he brought it into the closest connection with ethics. Israel and the nations round about Israel were to be destroyed by the righteous God in just recompense for their sins. Apart from the ethical *motif* here given by Amos, the woe-eschatology was simply the working of phantasy upon fear. In precisely the same way, apart from an ethical principle, the weal-eschatology was simply the working of phantasy upon desire; it was intellectually and spiritually worthless. What possible justification have we for assuming that Amos would have predicted the future glory of Judah as a matter of course? It has, indeed, been maintained that ethical and spiritual conditions in Judah at this time were far better than in the northern kingdom,[1] but the evidence for this is not strong. We must bear in mind the anti-Israelite tendency of the book of Kings, and in view of the contentions of Micah and Isaiah not so many years later, it is difficult to suppose Amos to have thought Judah such that automatically the golden age was about to dawn there. Facts must not be denied on *a priori* and theological grounds; at the same time it cannot be said too strongly that if Amos predicted the golden age for Judah without showing that this age was essentially bound up with God's ethical government of the world, he was the victim of sheer phantasy. It is not probable that he who opposed the phantasy prophets of northern Israel would himself have been guilty of this inconsistency.

[1] See Hölscher, *Die Profeten*, p. 192.

It is argued by Sellin [1] that ix. 14 does not necessarily refer to the exile. That may be granted, but the reference is naturally so taken. Again, we cannot argue *a priori* that ideas of the supernatural fertility of the country here apparently supposed could not have been current prior to the exile, but if we can show that this sort of language is strange to the other pre-exilic prophets, there will be a further presumption against its authenticity in Amos. It may further be added that if Amos must have taken over the weal-eschatology with the woe-eschatology of his time, traces of a similar necessity we should expect to find in Elijah and later in Deuteronomy and the writings of the Deuteronomic school.

Unless, therefore, our study of the latter prophets should lead us to reconsider our judgment about Amos in the light of probabilities, we shall be wise without hesitation to reject as unauthentic these closing verses of weal.

Amos, then, addressed his prophecies to the northern kingdom only.

(2) We turn, therefore, to the allied problem, whether or to what extent Amos preached a doctrine of a remnant.

If a prophet should be found to teach that the faithful or the pious will survive the judgment, and that they should be heirs of the paradisaic age to come, we might fairly say that the eschatological phantasies of weal had been taken up into the service of religion, having suffered an essential change on the way by being moralized. Are there any indications of such a doctrine in Amos? The answer has been given, by Meinhold in particular, in the emphatic negative,

[1] Ad loc.

on the ground that although the rich were the oppressors and the poor the oppressed, yet in the judgment, as foreseen by Amos, the great house and the little house should indiscriminately suffer destruction.[1] In more general terms the objection might be put in the form that Amos's prophecy is addressed, not to individuals, but to the nation as a whole; it was no part of his business to snatch brands from the burning or to warn individuals to "flee from the wrath to come." In this contention there is beyond doubt a large element of truth. It is, indeed, one of the puzzles in the interpretation of prophecy that oracles are almost always addressed to the nation, yet the religion of the prophets is such as can only be realized by awakened individuals. But it is possible to exaggerate this difficulty. A political orator may appeal to "England" to put away her social evils, or he may treat extensively of John Bull, and these generalizations do, in fact, often lead to very confused thinking,[2] yet the orator is quite consciously appealing to individuals and has no expectation that his exhortations are applicable save to individuals. There is really no need to suppose that the Hebrew prophet was not at least as conscious as any English politician that only individuals could respond to his call. It is plain that Amos did not predict, or did not always predict, the total extermination of the northern population; there might well be a "remnant of Joseph," like a couple of legs or the flap of an ear, but there is no indication that this was to be a holy remnant and heir of the returned paradise.

[1] See Meinhold, *Der heilige Rest*, p. 47. Bonn, 1903.
[2] See further *Christ and Cæsar*, pp. 121 ff., Micklem and Morgan. Geo. Allen and Unwin, 1921.

None the less, at times Amos would appear to have taught a doctrine similar in certain points to that of a holy remnant. In v. 4f. and v. 14f. he predicts the destruction of the sanctuaries, and he warns the people against resorting to them: "Let them seek Adonai and they shall live." This suggests, if it does not positively state, that those who did not resort thither would escape the judgment. There is perhaps some evidence to show [1] that at one time Amos had some hope that his message might find a hearing, but that at last he was convinced that nothing could save the obdurate nation. He may then sometimes have taught that the divine vengeance would light upon the sanctuaries as the centre of corruption, and that those absent from them would be spared; this would be in some sense the saving of a holy remnant, but, if this is the case, it is to be observed that Amos does not apply to this remnant any promises of paradise returned. If he had applied to these the ideas which were to be derived from the eschatology of weal, we should say that there was an ethical and religious value in his teaching, but none the less that in fact it was visionary and fantastic. We know very well in these days that when ruin falls upon a nation for its sins, the innocent starve as well as the guilty; we have no reason to doubt that Amos knew that too. It would, then, be reasonable to suppose that Amos, according to his ability, attempted to awaken the conscience of individuals, warning them of the wrath to come, but there is no evidence that he clearly annexed to such appeals any offers of reward in this world or in that to come. But we cannot settle this question till we have considered more closely the

[1] The sequence of visions in Chaps. vii and viii.

nature of the destruction which Amos predicted. If he predicted punishment at the hands of Assyria, doubtless Assyria would be undiscriminating; if, on the other hand, he expected fire from heaven to fall upon Samaria, Bethel and other places where vice flaunted itself, he might have anticipated the salvation of the faithful and the righteous.

(3) We turn, then, to consider the nature of the calamity which he foretold.

It was customary at one time to suppose that Amos was a man of unusually clear political perception, who, while his contemporaries ate, drank and made merry, saw ever the sinister shadow of Assyria upon the horizon. Thus Smend [1] says that in the visions of Chap. vii the reference to locusts and drought is of psychological interest only, for all the while Amos has Assyria in his mind. This ascription of political wisdom to Amos sometimes accompanies an attempt to represent the prophets as rational thinkers as we suppose ourselves to be; but the result is very curious. If Amos, like a modern commentator, had been conscious of the approaching shadow of Assyria, would he not, if he were as rational as the commentator, see clearly that the doom of Israel was sealed? But if the destruction of Israel was inevitable, what had it to do with Israel's sin? If Amos seriously contended that, should Israel do righteousness and seek the Lord, it would be spared, what modern commentator would regard him as a rational man? The truth is that the Hebrew prophets were not rational by any standards of the modern world. But we come down to the question of fact. Was Amos or was he not dominated or influenced

[1] Op. cit., p. 183.

by that menace of Assyria which to us *post eventum* is so clear?

In the first place Assyria is not mentioned by name, unless possibly in iii. 9, LXX. It is not easy to prove that at this time Assyria was in the people's thoughts or even in Amos's thoughts. The mere fact that destruction is threatened by the sword, as in v. iii and vii. 9, does not necessarily imply a reference to Assyria, for the sword may well be the sword of Adonai[1]; nor was Assyria the only nation that carried off a captivity.[2] Are there, then, any passages that must refer to Assyria and to no other power? The most impressive passages in this connection are v. 27, vi. 7 and ix. 4. Of these it may be said that the captivity referred to in vi. 7 and ix. 4 will certainly refer to Assyria if in v. 27 Amos means Assyria, and that in any case the natural way of understanding the verses is of Assyria, the one power that habitually used the method of captivity on a large scale. In v. 27 the captivity beyond Damascus must be at the hands of Assyria. The last clause of the verse is certainly a gloss, and it might be argued by those who reject the preceding verse as a gloss that ver. 27 goes well with the preceding, as it does not fit on to ver. 25; but, as will appear, I am not of opinion that ver. 26 is wholly a gloss, and apart from the final clause there is no justification for regarding ver. 27 as unauthentic. It must therefore be regarded as substantially certain that Amos predicted, but in cryptic terms, an Assyrian captivity. It is as if the people, being full of confidence when they considered Damascus, their hereditary enemy, Amos warned them that none the less there were powers beyond Damascus,

[1] See Gressmann, *Ursprung*, pp. 76 ff. [2] See Amos i. 6.

terrible and irresistible. Yet by itself this is a misleading statement. His threatenings of doom are found throughout the book, but very few of them can with any likelihood be connected with Assyria. He foretells doom by means of fire (the divine fire, as in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, iv. 11 and v. 6), by earthquake (ii. 13 ff.) and by pestilence (iv. 10), and by other means. In fact, he uses the symbolism of the woe-eschatology in many forms. Still, if the reference to Assyria is definite and the eschatological language is symbolic, it would be natural to suppose that he means Assyria under all the symbolism. But it can, I think, be shown that the language of the woe-eschatology is not symbolic in this sense. In a number of passages Amos predicts the destruction of the famous sanctuaries of Israel (in particular is this true of the altar at Bethel, ix. 1 ff.) ; he predicts a divine judgment upon these particular places, and in this connection an Assyrian invasion seems excluded, for such an invasion would not be directed primarily to the sanctuaries. It is not to be thought that Amos uses a wealth of imagery to depict the coming ruin and refers so rarely and obscurely to Assyria when a military invasion and captivity was the dominant thought in his mind. It is just possible that when Amos realized that his mission was wholly fruitless he predicted the total destruction of the whole nation by the Assyrians. But Sellin is almost certainly right in saying that Amos's predictions of doom have no essential connection with his political insight.[1] "The motive of his prophecy," says Hölscher, "was not the Assyrian peril, though he was aware of it, but an ethical postulate."[2] Did

[1] *Zwölfprophetenbuch*, p. 149. [2] *Gesch. isr. u. jüd. Rel.*, p. 103.

Amos, then, intend his " eschatological " language in any literal sense ?

This is one of those modern questions which admit of no " Yes " or " No " reply. It is our ignorance of psychology which leads us to think that we have here a dilemma. It would be a crass anachronism to suppose that in his " eschatological " language of fire, earthquake, flood, pestilence, drought, etc., Amos was consciously using metaphorical language with his eye all the while on Assyria ; on the other hand, that he did not mean his eschatological figures quite literally may be seen from two indications : in the first place the images vary, and it would be absurd to suppose that the mind of Amos was particularly concerned about the manner of the doom, and that he kept changing his mind about its exact nature ; in the second place, the vision in ix. 1 ff. is very illuminating in this connection. Amos sees in vision or hallucination the destruction of the Bethel altar by the immediate stroke of God ; he sees the terrified people fleeing and being overtaken by destruction though they hide them on Carmel's high crown or deep in the sea. The vision continues (ix. 4) : " And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword and it shall slay them : and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil and not for good." This passage comes from one of the grandest and most impressive of Amos's poems. To think that he is consciously using metaphor is to misunderstand the vividness and immediate nature of the prophetic vision. With the eye of his mind (which is like the eye of the dreamer) he *sees* this vision ; and yet we cannot take it literally and prosaically without reducing it to barren nonsense. How can the bewildered and

terrified worshippers at Bethel make good their escape by "going into captivity before their enemies"? These four verses are not a sober and systematic account of the various useless refuges which Amos says the Bethel-worshippers will as a matter of fact seek out in the future. In a vision he *sees* this terrific scene; he sees the scattering crowds; he sees that there is no place in the world where they shall escape the divine vengeance. This is poetry and vision, not narrative prose and not conscious metaphor. From the point of view of psychology this is dream language, dream symbolism, and the current eschatological ideas have provided the symbolism. This point, if it be established, is of the first importance in the interpretation of prophecy. Those on the one hand who have taken the prophetic imagery as mere metaphor, more or less consciously used, have indeed drawn the picture of the prophets after the fashion of the modern man, but they have emasculated and devitalized the prophets in so doing. But the reaction from this modernizing interpretation has gone too far; for those who have credited the prophets with taking over the eschatological notions of their time have assumed without warrant that current eschatological language was intended literally or prosaically, and further, that it is so used by the Hebrew prophets; hence the prophets have virtually been depicted as fantastic visionaries, which is as little true of them as that they were modern rationalists. This same principle is of primary importance also in New Testament exegesis. When the Lord said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," we miss the whole passion and tension of the occasion if we take the language as merely metaphorical;

on the other hand, it is clearly not to be taken literally.

This leads us to the further question as to how far Amos was a supernaturalist and how far he thought that the divine judgments would take place in the natural order. Amos has been not very happily called "the prophet of causation." [1] This is not true if by it is understood that Amos had an inkling of that which we call the "uniformity of Nature." Events such as pestilence, famine, war, are the direct visitations of God for His own purposes. Amos had no sense of the natural order which is so clear to the modern mind, but he had an overwhelming sense of the moral order, which is so obscure to us. It was clear as daylight to him that the nation that sinneth it shall die, and that this is the inevitable, inexorable law of God's universe.

We have seen no trace that Amos accepted any dogma of world-destruction or world-renewal. Gressmann thinks that in the first two visions of Chap. vii Amos adopts current ideas of the mythical monster Tehom (Tiamat) and of apocalyptic locusts (like Mr. Wells's giant wasps in *The Food of the Gods*), with their fabulous king Gog.[2] With these passages we may couple the reference to the sea-serpent or "cosmological snake" in ix. 3. These instances are not all equally certain, but the matter ceases to be of primary importance once we have grasped the principle that such imagery is in any event to be interpreted poetically or as dream symbolism and not as pedestrian prose or natural history.

(4) We turn, then, to a consideration of the vital ques-

[1] By Wellhausen, ad. iii. 3 ff.
[2] Following the LXX. See *S.A.T.*, ad loc.

tion: For what offence is judgment to come upon Israel? Is it for polytheism or ethical transgression, or for a false cultus or for more than one of these?

In the first place it should be noticed that in no place does Amos accuse the people of worshipping Baal or the baalim, and the passage v. 21 ff. is proof positive that the cultus—nominally at least—was offered in honour of Yahweh. But various passages have been adduced to prove the worship of foreign gods in Israel in Amos's day.

An ingenious emendation has been suggested for the difficult "Hermonwards" of iv. 3 to the effect that the women in their haste would throw away as an encumbrance the images of their god Rimmon (Harimmônah). But both the article and the feminine termination rule out this suggestion, and the passage is naturally interpreted to mean that the "cows of Bashan" shall be driven back to the place they came from, Hermon, the mountain of Bashan. A more likely passage is v. 26, where it has not unreasonably been supposed that there is a direct reference to the cult of Sakkut and Kevan, possibly as "Kevan your Selem." Of these deities Baethgen says[1]: "Sakkut and Kevan are Assyrian astral deities which the Israelites had taken over from the Assyrians and, as it would appear, had brought into connection with their Moloch (king) and the Aramaic divine figure Selem, which must have had followers among the Israelites, so that a Sakkut-Melek and a Kevan-Selem arose." But Meinhold points out that Sakkuth-Adar is chief god rather of the Babylonians than the Assyrians[1]; but in either event it is as unlikely as anything can be that

[1] *Beiträge zur semit. Rel. gesch.*, p. 239.
[1] Op. cit., p. 36, n.

Assyrian or Babylonian deities should be worshipped in Israel at this period, and if this reading of the text were secure, we should be almost bound to suppose that we have here a gloss from someone who was aware of the mixed cults in Samaria after the introduction of the colonists subsequent to the fall of the city in 722 B.C. But almost irresistible is the emendation of the text suggested by Sellin, following Klostermann. He reads, transposing vers. 24 and 25 :

Did ye then bring me sacrifice and offering
In the wilderness forty years ?
Then shall justice pour forth like water
And righteousness like an enduring stream.
And ye shall be carried away with the tabernacle of your king
And with your god whom ye have made,
And I will bring you into exile
Beyond Damascus,
Saith Yahweh.[1]

This passage falls to be considered later in another connection. In no case is it safe on the basis of this verse to infer that Amos himself charges the people with the worship of foreign gods.

Again, the received text of viii. 14 makes poor sense. It is very tempting to adopt the suggestion that the "sin" of Samaria (ashmath) should be connected with the name Asm-bethel, which we find in the Elephantine papyri,[2] and that for the meaningless *derek* we should read *dodecha* and understand the reference to be to the god Dod or Dodo, of whom we know from the Moabite stone. When we remember that Dan is in itself a divine name, we find ourselves

[1] *Das Zwölfprophetenbuch*, pp. 194 ff. He reads *wenissa' them* takes *'eth* to mean "with," and understands the reference to be to the golden calf at Bethel ; v. 24 is to be taken as a threat.

[2] Sachau, p. 73, col. 7.

with three heathen divine names and very good sense for the passage as a whole:

> They that swear by Asmenah of Samaria,
> that say, As thy God liveth, O Dan,
> and as thy Dod liveth, O Beersheba.

Even if this reconstruction be adopted, it would be a further question whether the verse could be by Amos. It has, however, been suggested that Samaria was in no sense an ancient shrine in Israel; moreover, the mention of Dan without Bethel is strange. There is therefore much justification for Wellhausen's suggestion that the "sin of Samaria" has been put in the place of an original "the god of Bethel." Sellin thinks it not impossible that an oath might have been taken "by the Beersheba pilgrimage," but he prefers the reading *dodecha*, only he takes it not as a proper name, but as meaning "tutelary deity." This avoids the necessity of supposing that the worship of foreign deities comes into the question, though the use of Dod (properly "darling" or "uncle") is strange and without adequate parallel. There is no other passage that with any show of reason can be taken to indicate polytheism in Amos's writings.[1] It seems fair to assume that had Amos charged the people with polytheism, he would have made the charge abundantly clear, and, as we shall see, his main charges against them are quite other. If it be thought that the passage under discussion almost certainly involves a charge of polytheism, it can easily be supposed that the whole verse, apart from the last clauses, are a gloss added at a later date; indeed, if the whole verse be retained,

[1] For *heth'elôhim* cannot with the Targum be taken of idolatry, for in that case the text must read "houses" (in the plural) "of your gods"; moreover, ver. 22 ff. is decisive against this.

it will be almost necessary to transpose the last clause of it to the beginning of the verse, for the reference to these deities breaks the connection of thought. We shall be wise, therefore, with almost no hesitation to infer that polytheism is not one of the charges brought by Amos against Israel.[1]

No elaborate proof is required that Amos charges Israel with ethical corruption, for this is patently the subject of a large part of his message. In ii. 6–8 the charge is purely ethical and has nothing immediately to do with the cultus[2]; so, too, v. 7, 10–15, viii. 4–6. At the same time there is no doubt that Amos attacked the cultus also. This is seen pre-eminently in his opposition to the worship of Bethel and Gilgal (iii. 14, v. 5), and in his vision of the destruction of the altar at Bethel in ix. 1 ff. But it is not so clear whether we are to suppose that he denounced the cultus (*a*) because it was connected with immorality, or (*b*) because it was not the true Yahweh cultus, or (*c*) because Yahweh will have only a spiritual worship altogether without rites and sacraments. It is eminently likely that licentious rites and debauchery were connected with the worship of the Israelite high places, but Amos cannot be fairly interpreted as meaning that if only ethical laws were honoured in Israel,

[1] Dussaud in *Les Origines Cananaennes du sacrifice israelite*, pp. 231 ff., maintains that in northern Israel there was the cult of the god Bethel. He bases this contention partly on Gen. xxxi. 13, Jer. xlviii. 13, etc. Bethel, he says, is another name for the Amorite and Syrian god Hadad, always represented with or by a bull. He points out that in the Elephantine papyri we find the same consort 'Anat ascribed to Yahweh and to Bethel; therefore it is fair to suppose that the cult in northern Israel was of a god Yahweh-Bethel. If this is so, it will still be the case that Amos protests, not against polytheism, but against a false Yahweh religion and cultus.

[2] It is not probable that in ii. 7 there is a reference to religious prostitution.

he would have no quarrel with the cultus. In the first place we have seen reason to suppose that he definitely repudiates the worship of the golden calf in v. 26[1]; this, however, is uncertain. In iv. 4 f. he appears to say that the local sacrifices at Bethel and Gilgal please none but those who participate in them, and that they are "sin" and "transgression." We have no right to suppose that Amos meant that, as a matter of fact, whenever the people went to sacrifice at Bethel or Gilgal they were guilty of some unnamed immoralities, with the implication that if they went to these places and avoided immorality he would have no word of protest; for his denunciation of these sanctuaries is constant, and he predicts their special visitation in the day of judgment, but he never indicates particular elements in the worship as being the sole ground of his denunciation; he protests against the worship as such. At the same time, when he dubbed this worship "sin" and "transgression," his words must have been intelligible to his audience; it must have been possible that their consciences should have responded. Therefore he cannot have been enunciating a doctrine altogether new; therefore there must have been a tradition in Israel to the effect that such worship was not that which Yahweh, their God, required.[2] This illuminates the past of Israel, and in particular goes to support the interpretation of Elijah's work, given above, as the repudiation of Canaanite rites in the worship of Yahweh. Similarly, in v. 4 f. Amos does not say "seek ye me at Bethel"—that is, reform your cultus at Bethel. "Seeking Bethel" is contrasted with "seeking

[1] See supra, p. 120.

[2] This tradition we find in E as in J; cf. J Ex. xxxii., 25 ff. and E Ex. xxxii., 19 ff.

me" ; the two are incompatible ; moreover, " seeking me " is later defined, in v. 14, as " seeking good "—that is, moral good. *Prima facie,* this looks like a repudiation of all ceremonies and sacraments whatsoever. Is such an interpretation favoured or necessitated by other passages ? In v. 21–3, again, the cultus seems to be wholly repudiated, but it would be just possible to suppose the pronouns to be strongly emphasized : " I hate, I despise *your* feasts, and I will take no delight in *your* solemn assemblies," with the implication that Yahweh would not under all circumstances refuse sacrifices and offerings, but only at the hands of a people without moral rectitude. But could this be maintained in the face of v. 25, where Amos appears to imply that the whole sacrificial system is an importation into the religion of Yahweh after the settlement in Canaan, that sacrifice had nothing to do with the institutions of Moses ? The question, " Did ye bring sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness ? " can in the context expect only the answer, " No." Not only does Amos deny that sacrifice has anything to do with the institutions of Moses, but he assumes that this truth was recognized as such by his audience. This conclusion can only be avoided by the desperate expedient of translating the passage, " Was it *only* sacrifices and offerings that ye brought me in the wilderness ? " [1] This desperate expedient may appeal to some, for there are three reasons in particular why we hesitate to accept the natural interpretation of Amos's words : (1) It involves great reconsideration of the religious ideas of ancient Israel, and more particularly of the work of Moses ; (2) sacrifice was so universal a custom in the ancient world

[1] Harper, *I.C.C.*, ad loc.

that we find it difficult to suppose that Amos could have pictured or contemplated a religion without rites and sacraments; and (3) the modern world is for the most part still far removed from the comprehension of a religion that is purely personal and spiritual. None the less, there seems no option for scientific and objective exegesis but to understand that Amos repudiates the sacrificial cultus as a whole on the ground that it has nothing in the world to do with the religion of Moses. If v. 25 stood by itself, it might be questioned, perhaps, whether so great weight should be laid on the apparent testimony of a single verse, but, as we have seen, this is also the natural interpretation of other passages in Amos, and it is fortified by the tradition of the later prophets to be considered in subsequent chapters.

Are we, then, to draw the conclusion that Amos, when at home at Tekoa, absented himself from all the religious observances of his neighbours on the ground of principle? This is a speculative question, and we are not under obligation to answer it in the affirmative. The Hebrew prophets were not theorists, and the following supposition is reasonable: clearly Amos could not have laid stress upon the sacrifices and other sacraments of the Tekoa community. In his view (presumably also in the view of many in Judah) they had nothing to do with the religion of Moses; they were a later development, but in so far as they were solemn and appealed to the feelings of the worshippers and were untainted by licentiousness, and so long as they were regarded as expressions of the people's devotion to Yahweh, not as means to compel his favour and good pleasure to them, what reason had Amos to think that Yahweh would refuse

or be displeased with them? It is natural to suppose that the worship at Tekoa, on the edge of the wilderness, was very different in form and feeling from the licentious and extravagant rites of northern Israel. When Amos saw the splendid and debauched worship at the great sanctuaries at Bethel and Gilgal, when he saw the people blindly trusting to the efficacy of these rites to keep and augment the goodwill of God, when he saw that the cultus was wholly divorced from morality, his mind went back to the religion of Moses, and he denounced the cultus root and branch as having nothing to do with the religion of Yahweh. Amos, then, like Elijah, was a reformer in the spirit and fashion of Moses. The view maintained by some scholars that virtually nothing is known with any assurance of the Mosaic ordinances and institutions, and that true religion, as we understand it, virtually first raises its head with Amos, is untenable. Moses is the figure that from first to last dominates Hebrew history, and it is necessary for us to assume that through the centuries, from Moses to Amos, traditions had lingered in Israel of that ethical, imageless and spiritual worship of the wilderness which had obtained when first Israel became a nation and entered into covenant with the Lord their God.

Amos, as Dr. Oman points out in an aside,[1] is the true precursor of Kant. Man's knowledge of God and communion with Him, he taught, is in the sphere of the ethical; the worship of God is ethical, not institutional. Amos's thought of God is anthropomorphic (that is, personal), not physiomorphic (that is, spatial). Amos knew of the moral order, not of the natural; the operations of the moral order were

[1] In *The Problem of Faith and Freedom.*

conditional upon the response of human freedom. In the natural order events were not predetermined from of old, but all were of the workings of Providence, and all had a spiritual significance and meaning; all were used aright as their significance was seen. All this involves not only monotheism, but strictly personal and spiritual religion, as it is as yet but imperfectly understood.

While, therefore, Amos is a thorough-going *supernaturalist*, he is no phantasy-eschatologist. The Day is not eschatologically conceived; it comes in the natural (moral) order.

CHAPTER IV

HOSEA

THE book of Hosea is in some ways one of the most perplexing of the prophetic writings. Nearly all its problems gather round the question of the relation of the first three chapters to the rest of the book. We shall find, as usual, that if we enquire into the eschatology of the prophet or, not to prejudge the question, into his outlook upon the future, we shall be near to the heart of the matter. Here one of the most interesting suggestions is that made recently by Sellin in his book on Moses.[1] With the whole of his discussion we are not here concerned. In Sellin's view Hosea's eschatology is in brief this: that whereas the whole national life, as it had developed in Canaan, was one great falling away from the God of Israel, a catastrophic divine judgment was to be expected; this act of God would serve to reduce Canaan to a wilderness, and to drive Israel back into the wilderness from which originally they came in the days of Moses, and here in the old wilderness, in the neighbourhood of the sacred mountain, they would find Paradise again, the garden of God. The main passage upon which this theory of the expectation of this glad discovery is based is ii. 14–23.[2] It is Sellin's

[1] *Mose u. seine Bedeutung für die isr. jüd. Religionsgeschichte*, 1922.

[2] Heb. ii. 16–25; op. cit., p. 20. After ver. 14 Sellin reads ver. 7b.

view that this expectation of judgment and of this salvation lies behind the whole book.

The problems that have been raised about the first three chapters are many and difficult, and it is legitimate that we should first approach the later chapters and from them seek for light upon Chaps. i. to iii. If we had only Chaps. iv. to the end, what judgment should we form of the prophet's outlook upon the future? In the first place it should be noted that, with the exception of one and a half verses (iv. 16b and x. 12), the whole of the great stretch of the book from iv. 1 to x. 15 is a long denunciation of sin and threatening of doom. The half-verse (iv. 16b) is the denial and contradiction of its whole context, and is naturally taken to be a marginal gloss based, perhaps, on Isa. xxx. 23. Chap. x. 12 is, indeed, a word of hope, but in the language of exhortation not by any means of eschatological and unconditional expectation. Indeed, it is not easy to fit this verse into the scheme of a discovery of Paradise round about Mount Sinai. There is a gleam of hope, indeed, in v. 15, vi. 1 ff., but it is a hope of repentance after chastisement, not the assured expectation of a supernatural salvation.[1] It should give us pause that so great a section of the book is concerned almost solely with sin and judgment, and not at all with the depicting of a future state of bliss. Moreover, while it is not to be denied that much evidence might be found in these chapters for the expectation that Canaan would be turned into a wilderness, the threat of war and of captivity, which by no means easily fits into Sellin's scheme, is not

[1] "I will go and return unto my place" (i.e. abandon Canaan) "until they acknowledge their offence . . . and in their affliction seek me earnestly, saying . . ."

to be eliminated (e.g. v. 8 ff.; vi. 11b; viii. 3; ix. 3, 13, 17; x. 14), even though the text be not of undisputed authenticity in all these cases. When we turn to the remaining chapters much the same is true. Chap. xiv is naturally taken first as an appeal by the prophet (vers. 1–3); then of the divine answer that will be given if the people should respond to the appeal (vers. 4–8, if authentic); xii. 6 is likewise an appeal. We are left, then, with xi. 9–11 and xii. 9 as the solitary verses in these last four chapters which might give some clear countenance to a doctrine of eschatological salvation, unconditional and according to a preconceived plan. These passages, then, call first for consideration.[1]

Chap. xi. 9–11 is a passage that has given exegetes much difficulty, and it is to be admitted that in Sellin's reconstruction it bears good sense.[2] He is able to give tolerable sense to the difficult expressions in ver. 10, " will come trembling from the west." By this he understands that the remnant in Canaan will march westwards into the desert on their way to the mount of God. It is perhaps hypercritical to suggest that Mount Sinai is to the south rather than the east of Canaan, for the route might well be eastwards across Jordan. But it is to be noted that even Sellin here contemplates that the catastrophic judgment has taken the form of military disaster and deportation to Egypt and Assyria. This really fits very ill with the fundamental eschatology which Sellin thinks is to be traced throughout the book. For

[1] According to the English versions, xiii. 14a and b is taken of comfort; but the verse is taken naturally, if not necessarily, as a threat. Cf. Harper, Sellin, etc.

[2] Op. cit., pp. 24 ff. In ver. 10b he reads, adding a word *metri gratia*, " Yea, I will roar from my mountain."

there is nothing here about the reduction of Canaan to a desert (indeed, ver. 8 seems to exclude such a desolation if, with Sellin, it be taken with these later verses), nor is there any reference to the Paradise or garden of God according to the ideas of the assumed eschatology.[1]

It should be observed that the meaning of ver. 9 is ambiguous. Marti regards vers. 10 f. as clearly a gloss and understands ver. 9 as containing questions—"Shall I not execute? shall I not utterly destroy? for God is not one who should repent as a man might." This fits well the message of Hosea as we have so far considered it. The text of ver. 10, on any showing, needs alteration, and unless we shall find corroboration elsewhere of this assurance of hope after captivity in Hosea, Marti's view will be the natural one to accept. It is reasonably clear that these two verses, 10 f., could not of themselves bear the weight of any argument as to Hosea's expectations of the future. Our judgment of them must depend upon our general view of the prophet's teaching.

The one other verse that here falls to be discussed is xii. 9. The verse fits well Sellin's theory, the more so as he reads "in the wilderness" at the end of the verse, *metri gratia*, with the support of the LXX. At the same time it is by no means clear whether the verse is a promise, as Sellin supposes, or whether it is such a threat as in the context we should expect. The prospect of a renewed acquaintance with Arabia Deserta (without any suggestion in the context of a garden of God to be found there) would naturally

[1] There is justification for Sellin's translation "upon their nests" instead of "in their houses" in ver. 11 in view of the preposition, which, however, it is natural to alter to *'al*.

be taken as a threat along the lines of Elijah's vision on Mount Horeb.[1] The last clause of the verse, "as in the days of the solemn feast," is metrically defective and is not unnaturally supposed to be corrupt. We come, then, to the very surprising conclusion that if we possessed the book of Hosea without the first three chapters, we should find only a terrific denunciation of Israel and foretelling of doom, coupled in a few places with an appeal[2] wholly devoid of supernatural eschatology. The only verses which with any assurance can be taken to imply a certainty of restoration after the judgment—an eschatology of weal—are iv. 16b (an obvious gloss) and xi. 10 f., which in their context and outlook are obscure and not unnaturally suspect.

But a problem is raised by the juxtaposition in the book of categorical affirmations of doom not to be avoided on the one hand, and on the other appeals which seem to imply at least the possibility, if not the expectation, that Israel might yet turn and repent and be saved. Are we to see here a change of mind in the prophet? A very ingenious solution has been suggested by Meinhold[3] in connection with the interpretation of the first three chapters. According to this theory the prophet first of all preached unconditional woe; these passages correspond with the period when he named his three children and divorced his wife for ever. When he found that he could not put away his love for his unfaithful wife, he realized that God could not finally and for ever abandon Israel; hence appeal and hope came into

[1] See supra, pp. 94 ff.
[2] Chap. vi. 1–3. x. 12, xii. 6, xvi.
[3] *Das heilige Rest*, pp. 72 ff.

his message. But the theory is more detailed than this. Corresponding to the banishment of Gomer and her consequent hunger and lack of the necessities of life, the absolute doom of Israel takes the form of famine, pestilence and the like; corresponding with the temporary probation of Gomer after her re-purchase by the prophet is the prediction of punishment for Israel by war and exile, to be followed, it is assumed, by ultimate restoration. The book, then, should fall into two clearly defined portions. In the A section we should find doom predicted without hope, Assyria regarded as a friend or possible ally, and God regarded as the unwilling but relentless enemy of His people; in the B section, on the other hand, we should find that the punishment predicted is not expiatory but redemptive, that Assyria is the enemy and God the friend and redeemer of His people. This is one of the most ingenious reconstructions of the book of Hosea, but the objections to it are serious. In the first place it is connected with a very doubtful exegesis of the narrative in Chaps. i. to iii.; in the second place the references to Assyria as a possible friend and ally much more naturally refer to the politics of the end of the monarchy in northern Israel, when there was a regular pro-Assyrian party, than to the period before 740 B.C., when, Meinhold supposes, Assyria was first regarded as a serious menace; in the third place it does not seem possible to work out in detail a clear demarcation between prophecies of woe by famine and those of war by war and exile, and to show that the latter are connected with the appeals and elements of hope or happy expectation.

This theory leads us back to consider the problems of the first three chapters. The various interpreta-

tions of these chapters are bewildering, and we cannot consider them *seriatim*. But we have a certain advantage in turning to them after the consideration of the last chapters, in which we have found invective against the sins of Israel and the proclamation of doom, together with certain passages naturally taken as appeals to the people to turn to God, sometimes with promises or hopes annexed if they will but do so, while the very few passages which appear with any assurance to paint a hopeful and blessed picture of the future are in their context so suspicious that without corroboration no safe argument may be built upon them. The passages of hope in the second part are often supposed to correspond with the restoration of Gomer in the first part; but while the restoration of Gomer may perhaps be implied in the third chapter, it is not explicitly reported, and this is the more remarkable if really it is the climax and point of the whole story! It is by no means certain that in iii. 2 Hosea represents himself as buying back Gomer. As Sellin points out,[1] the romantic story of the wedding, followed by the divorce and the restoration, have to be read into the story by us, and this romance is generally assumed by readers in order to avoid the grave difficulty of supposing that the woman in Chap. iii. is not Gomer, but another. Sellin suggests that the order should be restored in some such way as this. "The word of the Lord came to me, Go take thee a whore" (i. 2); "and the Lord said unto me a second time, Go take thee a whore" (iii. 1), "so I went and took Gomer bath Diblaim" (i. 3), "and I bought her for fifteen pieces . . ." (iii. 2), "and she conceived and bare me a son" (i. 3). This

[1] *Kom.*, p. 36.

reconstruction avoids the extreme difficulty of supposing that Hosea, who only later in his wedded life discovered his wife's infidelity, drove away his own sons as well as his unfaithful wife. On the other hand, it gives no very good sense to iii. 3, for it is only assumed from the following verses what is the purpose of this seclusion for "many days," and it is part of Sellin's theory that the whole symbolical act lies in the marrying of a whore; the "many days" would naturally point symbolically to an exile or some other punishment quite unlike the catastrophe in Canaan, followed by the journey to the garden of God affirmed by Sellin. For our present enquiry, however, into the prophet's "eschatology," we are only concerned with the symbolism of the passage, and we have so far seen that while iii. 3 might be taken to imply a happy issue in the reform of the wife, such a happy issue is not stated. We turn, therefore, to the remaining parts of these chapters.

We do right to assume that the names given to the children supply us, as it were, with the keynotes of the prophetic preaching at least during the earlier part of his ministry. It is unnecessary to insist that in the names Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah and Lo-ammi no eschatology of hope or weal is implied; the message of these names is that of Amos or Elijah. Indeed, Sellin himself points out [1] that if we possessed only Hosea i. 2–9 and ii. 2–13 we could see no difference between his teaching and that of Elijah. It is true that the meaning of these names is expressly contradicted in i. 10, 11, ii. 23, but here we must suppose either that Hosea never meant the names to be taken *au pied du lettre*, or that he later changed

[1] *Kom.*, p. 30.

his mind, or that, as in the case of the text of Amos, we have marginal glosses introduced for comfort and edification in the days when the prophet's writings were edited for the purposes of public and private devotion. This last is undoubtedly the natural interpretation, unless we shall find further evidence in support of another view. The real crux, as Sellin states, is ii. 14–23 (Heb. ii. 16–25; after ver. 14 Sellin reads ii. 7c: "then shall she say," etc.). Here, if anywhere, shall we find a sure basis for a confident expectation of ultimate salvation in the teaching of Hosea. But the bright promises and assured conviction of hope follow so strangely after the earlier verses of the chapter that commentators such as Wellhausen, Marti and Harper have not unnaturally seen here the hand of the comforting editors of the exile. It should, however, be said that against vers. 14, 15, 19, 20 no internal evidence of spuriousness can be alleged.

We turn back to Sellin's theory that the catastrophe of the divine judgment is to fall on Canaan, reducing the land to a wilderness, that Israel will thereby be driven out into the wilderness from which they originally entered Canaan, and this wilderness will be turned into Paradise, the garden of God, round about Mount Sinai. Sellin has some very interesting and suggestive remarks upon the hidden or obscure references to Moses in the book of Hosea. It may well be that here he has thrown very important light both upon Hosea's thought and upon earlier Hebrew history; but for the moment we are immediately concerned with his theory of the Paradise of God to be miraculously called into being in the wilderness of Sinai. For this theory Sellin has to *assume* the

existence of a current "Paradise-myth" to this effect,[1] and he has to assume, further, that mentally the prophet has more or less combined this myth with historical reminiscences of Moses and the wilderness period in the past. On these assumptions, it is true, he gives a sense to various obscure and doubtful passages[2]; but it is right to distinguish and deal separately with the two parts of the theory—the first that Israel for her good is to be brought back to the wilderness, and the second that a supernatural fertility will be found there. Only the second is strictly eschatological. Here three general considerations are in point: If in Elijah or Amos or Isaiah or Jeremiah we find any tolerably convincing evidence that a miraculous transformation of Nature was part of the pre-exilic prophetic outlook, we should consider it likely, *a priori*, that such traits might be found in the teaching of Hosea; but, as we shall see, little evidence can be adduced to support Sellin from this source. Again, the "weal-eschatology," if it predict blessedness unconditionally in the future, is unethical; the difference, as we have seen,[3] between the true and the false prophets, lay largely in this—that the predictions of the former were ethically conditioned. Nor can any reason be shown why Hosea should have assumed that calamity of itself would so induce moral change that ethical conditions for the attainment of beatitude must infallibly be fulfilled. Third, it is particularly difficult to assume the expectation of an automatic improvement in the people in the case of a prophet

[1] *Mose*, pp. 30 f.

[2] E.g., "from the west," xi. 10; "they shall appoint themselves one head and go up from the land," i. 11; "vineyards from thence," ii. 15, etc.

[3] See supra, pp. 43 ff.

who tended so clearly to see religion in personal terms, whether of fatherhood (as in xi. 1 ff.) or of the conjugal relationship. *A priori* everything is against Sellin here, and it is difficult for him to meet these objections by the mere assumption of the myth of an oasis-Paradise which the prophet is supposed to have combined more or less with his very far from mythical reminiscences of the Mosaic age. But the suggestion that through the sufferings of the coming judgment Israel, or some section of Israel, will be reduced to the simplicities of the Mosaic era, even to the Bedouin life again, and that under such conditions the faith of the Mosaic age might wake afresh, perhaps under the leadership of a second Moses, is a doctrine easily believed of the heir of Elijah and Amos. Sellin may be right that Hosea foresees no salvation again on the soil of Palestine; but Hosea seems anxious to show that Yahweh is the giver of fertility to Canaan. But the vital question for our purpose here is whether Hosea *unconditionally* predicts an age of blessedness and restoration to the favour of God, or whether this remains still in the region, not of confidence, but hope. We have seen that in the second part of the book the presumably authentic passages where the clouds seem momentarily to lift are in the nature of appeals made to the people by Hosea in the assurance that if the people would but turn, their God was waiting to be gracious. Do we find more than this in the second chapter? It should first be noted that the phrase in ver. 14, "I will speak to her heart," involving the appeal to insight and to loyalty, really belongs to a different sphere of religion from that of the "weal-eschatology," which in the end involves a necessary and *unconditional*

assurance of the future. Secondly, we should observe that we are at liberty to read ver. 14 as still in some measure part of the threat, and that vers. 15, 17, 19, 20 may be translated, " that I may give her vineyards from thence . . . and that I may take away . . . and that I may betroth. . . ." [1] It is also very natural to take the other oracles, with their suspicious phrase " in that day," as later additions. Thus the verses in this section against which, on internal grounds, no argument can be alleged turn out to be exactly along the line of the appeals and hopes which we found in the later sections of the book. Moreover, they fit exactly into the picture of the religion of the pre-exilic prophets from Elijah to Jeremiah. Here, as elsewhere, amid these problems of great perplexity, no more can be said than that this solution of the problem is based upon a reasonable treatment of the text, that it fits into the whole picture of the religion of Israel over a long period, and that the denial of it brings confusion and contradiction.

If this reconstruction is correct, Hosea remains the prophet of the God of love ; he predicts doom, not without a hope that repentance may lie beyond judgment, but he is not a prophet of the supposed " eschatology of weal."

One more point is to be noted as significant for the sequel. Sellin is right in maintaining that, in the view of Hosea, the whole national life, as it had developed in Canaan, was one long falling away from the God of Israel [2] ; in other words, the whole cultus

[1] It is natural, as Nowack suggests, to change the suffix of the verbs in vers. 19 f. and read, " I will betroth *her*."

[2] *Mose*, p. 11.

of the people was heathenism and had nothing to do with the religion of Moses. In vi. 6 the repudiation of sacrifice is quite explicit,[1] and Sellin offers suggestions to prove that Hosea accepted the Elohistic decalogue as the kernel and symbol and basis of the religion of Moses.

[1] Sellin, op. cit., p. 53, observes that the Passover is a communion meal, not a sacrifice.

CHAPTER V

ISAIAH

THAT a number of passages incorporated in Isa. i to xxxix are not the work of Isaiah of Jerusalem is very generally recognized, but about the limits of these interpolations it is difficult to expect agreement, partly because the acceptance or rejection of some of the disputed passages depends upon the view that is taken as to the likelihood that a prophet might be able to entertain logically inconsistent ideas in his mind or that his teaching may have undergone considerable variations. We are here concerned with one fundamental aspect of Isaiah's teaching, his outlook upon the future. There are certain passages in the book the authenticity of which cannot reasonably be doubted; the only secure, or relatively secure, plan is to take these sure passages as the norm of the prophet's thought, and to regard with great suspicion passages which may seem seriously out of harmony with the more certain elements in the prophet's teaching. The books of Amos and Hosea contain, we may say, the oracles of those prophets worked over by the hand of an editor, but the book of Isaiah is not the work of one prophet edited by a later hand; it is really a Golden Treasury of anonymous Hebrew prophecy bound up with the oracles of Isaiah of Jerusalem. Each passage has to be judged on its own merits.

(1) Happily there is no dubiety as to the authenticity of Isa. vi. 1–8, the account of the inaugural vision. We may not too hastily assume that the inaugural vision gives us in epitome the outline of Isaiah's whole theology or message, but we may expect to find here some of the fundamental ideas of his ministry. For our present purpose the following points may be considered: It is perhaps significant that the prophet sees Adonai as *king*. This must not be interpreted to mean that Isaiah repudiated for Judah the institution of human kingship, but the kingship of the God of Israel does not naturally fall into line with the expectation of a Messianic king, whether human or supernatural; too much stress, however, cannot legitimately be placed upon this.

Second, what is intended in the song of the seraphim by the expression "the whole earth is full of his glory"? Skinner[1] takes the statement to be of a present fact to which our eyes are blind. Gray[2] takes the glory of "Yahweh's self-revelation in His dealing with men." But it is possible, and on the whole more likely, that the clause should be taken prophetically of the divine glory which shall one day fill the world. Only if we take this interpretation we find a ground in the inaugural vision for glowing hopes of the future. The prophet might indeed see the Lord enthroned as king in Jerusalem, but His kingship was veiled from the eyes of men generally. It is natural to suppose that in vision the young prophet is inwardly persuaded that the whole earth shall one day manifest the glory which he has for a moment seen.

Third, Isaiah sees a seraph bring a hot stone from

[1] Isaiah, *Cambridge Bible for Schools*, vol. i, p. liii.
[2] Isaiah, *I.C.C.*, p. 107.

the altar and apply it to his lips with the message that his sin was now removed. How are we to understand this? It has been explained as indicating that Isaiah realized that the atoning efficacy of the altar was applied to him personally. But what virtue did the author of Isa. i. 10–20 ascribe to the altar? The hallucination must be interpreted as if it were a dream; the seraph, the fire from the altar, are dream-symbols which from earliest associations of childhood would naturally stand for forgiveness and atonement.

Are we to understand that vers. 9–13 are part of the inaugural vision? or are these the comments of a prophet in later years, sad and disillusioned? To some it has seemed incredible that a prophet should know from the beginning of his ministry that it was all foredoomed to failure; and there are doubtless many people who could not think of themselves as called to stand all their lives for a truth which they felt sure their contemporaries would not accept; but this is not a decisive consideration. The question cannot be conclusively settled; only it should be noted that if these verses of unrelieved woe were added by Isaiah at a later date, we must either suppose that they were written in some transient fit of melancholy, or we shall find it very difficult to ascribe to the prophet those glowing predictions of the future which we find in the book. A young man might have grown more hopeful as life went on; an old man, anticipating the glories of Messiah's reign, could scarcely have written thus.[1] In any event the outlook is one of doom and judgment which apparently is

[1] The last clause of ver. 13 is a gloss not found in LXX. Only a strained exegesis can find a ray of hope in the verse.

to come "in the natural order" by the sword and by captivity.

That Isaiah was a prophet of woe to his people cannot be questioned; their doom he pictures under many images, but consistently and constantly he predicts doom by invasion and conquest, always, or apparently always, at the hand of Assyria—e.g. v. 26–9; viii. 4–7; x. 5 f., 28–32; xxviii. 11; xxix. 3. Did he, however, beyond this doom by Assyria, see a future of supernatural blessedness, a Messianic age?

(2) We turn to particular passages, first vii. 1–17. We may take first and separately vers. 1–9. The occasion of the incident and prophecy is the Syro-Ephraimite w[illegible]. Ahaz has gone out presumably to inspect the city's water-supply. Isaiah, accompanied by his son Shear-jashub, is bidden to meet the king there to tell him to have no fear of these two kings, smoked out fire-brands as they are, and to assure him that the safety or destruction of Jerusalem depends entirely upon the presence or absence of faith. The story raises many questions. Here first we learn that Isaiah had a son whom he called Shear-jashub. It is not indicated that Isaiah carried the boy, and we are therefore justified in supposing that the boy was old enough to walk; that means that for some four or five years at least Shear-jashub or Remnant-shall-turn had been a key-word of Isaiah's preaching. What had he meant by it, and what is the significance of the boy's attendance on this occasion? The boy's name is often supposed to be connected with Isaiah's alleged doctrine of a holy remnant; but it is to be observed that this incident falls but a few years after the inaugural vision in which the holy remnant doctrine does not appear. Moreover, if the boy's name had been intended to express

the holy remnant doctrine which is ascribed to Isaiah, it must have been Remnant-shall-remain ! The name is usually translated Remnant-shall-return ; but return whence ? It might be from exile or from battle. If from exile, then Isaiah must have been predicting an exile ; he cannot have been predicting an exile at the hands of Damascus, for Rezin was a smoked-out firebrand ; then Assyria must be meant. But it is, to say the least of it, highly unlikely that in 735 B.C., when Ahaz had in mind an alliance with Assyria which Isaiah wished to prevent, Isaiah was constantly predicting as a key-word of his ministry an exile to Assyria ; moreover, if the boy's name signified that a remnant would return from exile in Assyria, what was the point of bringing the boy on this occasion ? If the boy's name meant, as some have supposed, " Only-a-remnant-shall-return-from-battle," what again is the boy brought for on this occasion ? Moreover, it is a *tour de force* to translate Shear-jashub as " *only* a remnant shall return." [1] Most commentators (as, for instance, Gray and Duhm) take the name to imply both warning and hope ; but it has not been sufficiently emphasized that the verb *shub* (שוב) is almost a technical word with the prophets, and that where it is used absolutely and the context does not imply a physical return, it always refers to a spiritual turning or returning to God. For four years or more, we must assume, Isaiah had been preaching that a remnant would turn again to God. This remnant idea is not explicitly stated in Chap. vi, but it is implied in the vision of Adonai as king and

[1] The ingenious correction suggested by Cheyne at one time, " Asshur shall return," might be credible if the incident had occurred after 701 or even 722, but what would the " return " of Assyria be in 735 ?

in the song of the seraphs that the whole world shall be full of His glory. The eternal purposes of God could not altogether fail; His glory should yet be manifested; civilization might be destroyed, but religion would not die; a remnant would turn. But who should compose the remnant? Ephraim was reprobate, Judah seemed reprobate; but even now, if Judah had faith, she should be established; Judah might yet be the remnant; now was the testing-time. This is the significance of Shear-jashub's presence on this occasion, and his name is closely connected with the oracle in ver. 9b.

For the rest we are concerned with vers. 7 and 9b, the intervening words raising questions not vital to our present enquiry. We note, then, that we have two oracles, one unconditional, "it shall not stand nor come to pass," the other conditional, "verily if thou have no strong trust, no trusty stronghold shall be thine!"[1] What is the mutual relation of these two? How did Isaiah know that the Syro-Ephraimite coalition would come to nothing? We cannot answer the question with certainty; his assurance might indeed derive from ordinary political sagacity, but in view of his later prediction in the time of Sennacherib, if genuine,[2] it is more likely that Isaiah had a presentiment of the failure of Pekah and Rezin, which he could neither explain nor deny. In the former case his prediction would have been based on intellectual, in the latter on psychic, gifts; in neither case is his oracle a religious statement; it is an unqualified statement of fact. But it is far otherwise with ver. 9b. It is a startling announcement which we may not modernize nor explain away. National

[1] Box's version. [2] See infra, pp. 168 f.

salvation depends on faith. Hitherto in the history of Israel it had been assumed that insight and inspiration were the prerogatives of the prophet; for the ordinary person religion had meant the prescribed rites and sacrifices, obedience to the word of priest or prophet, together with the dogma, explicit or assumed, that if these requirements of religion were fulfilled, the favour of God was assured. Faith, in the sense of walking by insight into eternal principles, a trusting in the character and purpose of God, had never till this moment, so far as we know, been required of the ordinary man or of the nation as a whole. Isaiah's contention here is that the safety and destiny of his people depends, not on armaments nor alliances nor material powers, but simply and solely on faith: "If ye will not believe, ye shall not be established." Isaiah has often been held up to admiration as a wise and far-seeing statesman; but from the point of view of most modern Christians Isaiah was not a statesman at all, but a sheer visionary. His political outlook was not rational in the modern sense, but throughout supernatural: "Not man, but God, determines history —that is the keynote of Isaiah's political action and advice." [1]

We turn to vers. 10–17, about which Hölscher not unjustly comments, "so viele Köpfe, so viele Meinungen." We cannot discuss in detail all the proposed interpretations and emendations of this passage, but we may fairly lay down two canons of interpretation here. In the first place the passage follows upon and is expressly connected with the foregoing verses, where the meaning is not in doubt; we may therefore start with the assumption that

[1] Gray, *I.C.C.*, p. lxxxi.

vers. 10–17, or such of them as are authentic, will elaborate and emphasize elements in the oracles of vers. 7 or 9b or both. In the second place, no interpretation is adequate or probable which puts a forced interpretation upon the name Immanuel in ver. 14. It is clear that Ahaz has rejected the prophet's appeal in the preceding verses. This is naturally understood to mean that he would not abandon his intention of calling in the aid of Assyria; he had proved that he had no faith; he refused the sign offered by the prophet (ver. 11); therefore, says Isaiah, God Himself shall give you a sign. *A priori* we do not know whether to expect that the sign will be of hope, confirming the assurance of ver. 7, or of doom, corresponding to ver. 9b. *A posteriori* it is not clear which we find, for ver. 16 speaks of hope and ver. 17 of doom. Or is the sign to be a sign confirming both the previous oracles? On the whole it seems perhaps more probable that the issue of vers. 1–9 will be a proclamation of doom to Ahaz, who has proved that he has no faith, for that, in Isaiah's view, was a far more important matter than the issue of the present campaign. Moreover, ver. 16, with its apparent promise of good news, is very difficult. The phrase "the land before whose two kings thou cowerest" is an extraordinary way of referring to Ephraim or Damascus or both; it is therefore the not unnatural suggestion of some that the words "before whose two kings thou cowerest" are a gloss due to a misunderstanding of the sign. In that case "the land" will be Judah, and the verse will be to the same effect as the proclamation of doom in ver. 17. The objection to taking the passage in this way is that the name Immanuel must surely be a sign of weal, not of woe.

This objection, however, is due to a misunderstanding, as will be shown. We come, then, to the child Immanuel. We turn first to Gressmann's theory, which has found a measure of support.[1] He holds that Isaiah predicts here the speedy birth of a supernatural Messiah; that the expression "the young woman," like the parallel phrase in Micah, "she that is with child," refers to a definite person and a well-established tradition about the supernatural birth of the Messiah. Various extra-Biblical parallels for this expectation are adduced. The child, whose qualities, according to this view, are described in ix. 6 f., is to be fed on curds and milk—the traditional divine food—and his name indicates that he is a more than human figure. While he is still a child the present enemies will be overthrown and the Messianic era will begin. The objections to this view are very serious. First, no good sense remains for ver. 17. It is true this verse is suspect, but there are many parallel passages of undoubted authenticity where Isaiah is a prophet of judgment upon Judah, and Gressmann's theory seems inconsistent with them all. Second, what is the connection in thought between the name Shear-jashub, unquestionably a key-word of Isaiah's preaching, and this new Messianic doctrine? Third, if Gressmann is right, then Isaiah's prophecy and expectation most certainly was not fulfilled, as he supposed, in the immediate future. Are we to suppose that he went about henceforth utterly discredited in his own eyes and those of the people? Fourth, this passage is preceded by the inaugural vision, followed by the prophecy of Maher-shalal-hash-baz, both involving prophecies of doom. What is

[1] *Ursprung d. Isr.-jüd. Eschatologie*, section 25; see also Schmidt, *S.A.T.*, pp. 72 ff.

the agreement of these with the Immanuel passage as Gressmann understands it? Fifth, it is noticeable that the overthrow of the national enemies is not to be the work of the Messiah; it will take place during his infancy. Will it be at the hands of Ahaz? Sixth, this confident and unconditional expectation of the speedy arrival of the Messiah is wholly inconsistent with Isaiah's fundamental and, as we shall see, reiterated doctrine of faith. Ver. 9b is addressed not to the king only, but to the nation; it is totally inconsistent with the view that, whether the nation have faith or not, the advent of the Messiah is to be immediately expected. Finally, it is an entirely unproved assumption that expectations of the birth of a supernatural Messiah were at this time current in Jerusalem. If it be only on this assumption that we can make sense of the passage before us, we shall be wise, with Box,[1] to suppose the passage is the work of a prophet who may have been Isaiah's contemporary; but in this case we should have to raise the question, Was he not one of the false prophets, one who prophesied weal to his people out of the phantasy and desires of his own heart? But we are not shut up to Gressmann's theory.

We have seen, and shall see yet more clearly in the sequel,[2] that the doctrine of faith is fundamental with Isaiah; we are not likely to be on the right lines of interpretation here if the Immanuel passage is inconsistent with this doctrine. Now, who can call her child Immanuel? The name might be given to any child born in a period of prosperity or to any child whose parents believed the word of those prophets

[1] *The Book of Isaiah*, pp. 47 f. and Appendix I.
[2] See supra, pp. 146 ff.

who unconditionally foretold a good time coming; but while the name might be given in either of these cases, it would in the prophet Isaiah's view be given in error, for that which the nation had to expect, being without saving faith, was destruction, not prosperity, the enmity of God, not his goodwill. Therefore if such parents are supposed to give the name, we should have a fine example of what is called "irony" in the Greek tragedians—the name might be given in hope or seriousness, but events would prove it to be a grim and dreadful jest! Such an interpretation is in the highest degree unlikely. But the only persons who could give the name to a child apart from this would be the prophet himself or the "remnant." The young woman is referred to with the definite article, and Isaiah had two other children with symbolical names, Shear-jashub and Maher-shalal-hash-baz; it is therefore most probable that the young woman is Isaiah's wife.[1] In a short time, then, says Isaiah, another child will be born to him. While the child is still an infant, ruin shall overwhelm the faithless Ahaz and his country, but a remnant shall be faithful—the prophet and his house and perhaps others too. God will be with them, and this is signified by the child's name, Immanuel. We have, then, a complete "eschatology" in the names of Isaiah's children: a remnant shall turn to the living God; God shall be with them, but for the rest—speedy prey: haste spoil! Thus vers. 10–17 accurately correspond with vers. 1–9.[2] The strongest argument for the

[1] While vers. 10 ff. are clearly connected with the preceding, it is not necessary to suppose that the Immanuel prophecy was delivered on the same day or on precisely the same occasion as the prophecies in vers. 7 and 9b.

[2] On this construction we are nearly bound with Duhm, Montefiori, etc., to regard ver. 15 as a gloss; for a diet of curds and

correctness of this interpretation can only be that after this study of Isaiah is concluded it will be seen that no interpretation except along these lines can be made without internal inconsistency to fit into the picture of Isaiah's thought and teaching. Here, therefore, for the present we leave the matter.

In viii. 1–8 we have another section dating from the same period, the Syro-Ephraimite war, and containing a very similar message. The placard and the boy's name, Maher-shalal-hash-baz, are to be signs in the sense that when the prophecy is fulfilled and Damascus and Samaria have fallen before Nineveh, they will remind the people that Isaiah had so predicted it, and he would be authenticated as a true prophet. The name indicates the absolute assurance of the prophet that the doom of Samaria and Damascus was writ; it is a categorical assertion closely parallel to vii. 7: "It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass." We may say, if we will, that Isaiah had a clear eye for political realities, but his attitude at this time is apt to be misunderstood. He is represented as having the politician's concern for the safety and prosperity of his people, and as saying in this crisis that the prudent thing to do was to have no fear of the alliance, and not make the mistake of needlessly calling in Assyria with the certainty of tribute and the loss of autonomy. On the contrary, the reason why he opposes an alliance with Assyria is that such an alliance involves lack of faith in God, and in the immediately following verses (5–8) he predicts the

honey cannot without violence be taken of poverty and privation. See Gray, *I.C.C.*, pp. 129 ff. Dr. Naish suggests that it may be the proper (desert) food for *nazir* and *nabi'*.

overwhelming of Judea by Assyria for no other reason than the Judeans' lack of faith. Isaiah is not concerned primarily with a question of political expediency, nor is he concerned, like the politician, primarily for the political autonomy of Judea ; he is dominated by the thought that the one thing that matters for his country is whether or no it will do the will of God. This is supernaturalism in politics, but, be it observed, it is not the supernaturalism of the "eschatologists"; it is not the view that God will bring the present world-order to a catastrophic end and inaugurate a new era, but the view that all the affairs of history are in the hands of God, and that even in this world God counts for more than the big battalions. The present vogue of the "eschatological" views reflects the difficulty felt by many to-day in understanding the immediate spiritual experience of the prophets and their sense of the active presence of the living God. Vers. 6–8 correspond with the oracle in vii. 9b, "If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established," but there are serious difficulties of exegesis. In the first place ver. 6b is evidently corrupt ; either we should omit the words "and rejoice in Rezin and Remaliah's son," or with a slight change of the text we should read "faint before" for "rejoice in." The prophecy is certainly uttered against the Judeans.

What, then, is it "to refuse the waters of Shiloah that go softly"? The waters of Shiloah are manifestly contrasted with the waters of the river, strong and many, representing the king of Assyria and all his glory. Do the waters of Shiloah represent the king of Judah and all his glory? The people of Judah, so far as we know, was in no danger of

repudiating Ahaz and such glory as might be his; therefore the waters of Shiloah in some way are a symbol for the God of Israel. Chap. vii. 3 gives us a hint that Ahaz was much concerned about the city's water-supply. The waters of Shiloah refer presumably to some aqueduct, with its smoothly flowing subterranean waters; it is a symbol for God, the true resource, invisible but sufficient, of those who trust in Him. The Assyrians, says Isaiah, will indeed sweep down and overflow Damascus and Samaria, but because there is no faith in Judah, Jerusalem also will be nearly drowned by them.

Verse 8b, with its violent change of metaphor from waters to wings, and its doubtful conclusions to be taken as the proper name Immanuel or the refrain "for God is with us," is exceedingly difficult. The best solution is that of Gray,[1] who supposes it to be a fragment of another poem of which we find a second stanza in vers. 9 f.

With this passage we may take xxviii. 14–22. It is not clear whether the covenant with death and agreement with Sheol refer to necromantic practices employed by the rulers to save their own lives in the coming trouble or to a treaty or alliance with Egypt. In any event, Isaiah predicts the utter futility of these devices, for God will turn against His people, strange as that sounds; the overflowing scourge shall pass through the country, and rulers and people alike shall be overwhelmed by it; for God is determined "to perform His act—strange is His act! And to work His work—barbaric is His work!"[2] The obverse of the prophet's message is in ver. 16: God lays, or is about to lay, in Zion for a foundation a costly stone: he that

[1] *I.C.C.*, pp. 144 ff. [2] Skinner.

believeth shall not make haste (*yahish*) or shall not be ashamed (*yabosh*) or shall not give way (*yamush*). This passage is closely allied in thought to vii. 9, viii. 6 ; it is stamped with the hall-mark of authenticity. But what exactly is this stone ? Is the image that of a foundation-stone with an inscription carven upon it ? In any case the meaning of the symbolism is clear : God is here symbolized no longer by the subterranean waters, but by the foundation-stone or possibly by the natural pinnacle of the rock itself on which the temple and palace were built. The little shelters the rulers had erected to save themselves shall be overthrown, and shall avail them nothing in the appalling catastrophe which is to visit them, but God with His eternal purposes remains, and all those who trust in Him shall be immovable or shall be without alarm or shall be vindicated—it is all the same. Upon Judea—speedy prey : haste spoil ; but a remnant shall turn to God and He shall be with them ; His sufficiency shall be as the subterranean waters, His strength like the great rock. In all these passages Isaiah's outlook is the same ; no political future is painted, no Messiah proclaimed, no world-catastrophe indicated, only the supernaturalism of one who believed in the hand of the living God controlling the destinies of the nation and vindicating through history His moral order. With the single exception of the Immanuel text we may say that no passages in Isaiah are more certainly authentic than these. We have in these a norm which may reasonably be applied to test the authenticity of other passages ; at least, we shall view with much suspicion any alleged doctrine of Isaiah which belongs to another world of thought from this fundamental doctrine of faith.

Did, then, Isaiah predict the coming of Messiah? This is not a question that can be answered *a priori*, for the Messianic idea takes many shapes,[1] some of which might be religiously harmonious with the outlook of Isaiah as we have so far understood it. The following passages fall to be considered, ix. 2–7, xi. 1–9, xxxii. 1–5. If in these we find a Messianic doctrine which we may with reason ascribe to Isaiah, we should perhaps reconsider our judgment of the oracle in vii. 14.

Of ix. 2–7, a certainly Messianic passage, though the term Messiah does not occur, we first ask whether the situation contemplated in the oracle fits in with the life and times of Isaiah. Here our difficulty is partly a matter of Hebrew tenses. When the prophet speaks of the seeing of a great light, the breaking of a staff, the birth of the child, is he referring to events that have already taken place, or does the perfect signify, as so often, that which is certain to take place in the future, or is the seeing of the light in the past and the birth of the child in the future? In view of passages considered above we may say with great assurance that either Isaiah has changed his mind about the future or else the statement about the people who have sat in darkness must refer to an historical and past event, for we have clearly seen that Isaiah did not look forward to a glorious future for the nation as a whole, but to a fearful judgment; only a remnant would be saved. To what events, then, in Isaiah's life could vers. 2 ff. refer? To the close

[1] It is exceedingly difficult to define the term "Messianic doctrine," but in the following pages I mean by "Messiah" either a "supernatural" king, a divine or quasi-divine being, or the ideal ruler of a golden age. Messiah is necessarily an eschatological concept.

of the Syro-Ephraimite war ?[1] But it seems highly improbable that Isaiah, whose views upon that war we have considered, would write in this triumphant strain about its conclusion, and the oracle of the Messiah, whether taken as past or future, was clearly falsified and delusive if uttered at this time. The shoulder-beating staff and the burdensome yoke would naturally refer to a foreign domination such as the Assyrian. It has therefore been suggested that vers. 2–4 refer to the deliverance from Sennacherib in 701 B.C., but " the people that dwelt in the land of deep shadow " is a strange way of referring to the Judeans still living in Judea, nor was the defeat of Sennacherib an occasion of the multiplication of the nation.[2] Again, the shining of the great light is more naturally explained by the child in vers. 6 f. than of the destruction of the Assyrian army, of a religious illumination rather than of a military triumph. Indeed, the particle at the beginning of ver. 6 practically requires us to take the light to be that of the Messianic child. The child described in vers. 6 f. might indeed be a supernatural being, but an ordinary human child might be intended.[3] If a human child is intended, will this be some sort of court ode to an infant child of Ahaz or of Hezekiah ?

But on theological grounds we can say with confidence that unless Isaiah's mind changed altogether in the course of his ministry, he cannot have written

[1] Skinner, p. 81.

[2] Though we might read הִגְלָה with Box, etc.

[3] For the name in ver. 6, like the names Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah, Maher-shalal-hash-baz, etc., may be a sermon in brief, not a description of the child ; similarly the name Immanuel, unless indeed an incarnation of God be in mind, tells us nothing about the nature or function of the child himself.

this passage. On occasion, it is true, he predicted the failure of a particular military expedition against Jerusalem, but can it be shown that he ever on such an occasion had given up his assurance that judgment would fall on the nation for its sins? It is not to a salvation of the existing nation that he looks forward, but to the saving of a remnant; his outlook on the future is always ethically and religiously conditioned. The only escape from this would be to show that in Hezekiah's reign the religious situation had so changed that Isaiah could look upon the nation as being the converted remnant in itself; even then serious difficulties remain. If, however, on other grounds a Messianic doctrine can reasonably be ascribed to Isaiah, further consideration would have to be given to this passage. At the moment it inspires no confidence. We know that in the fifth century and afterwards the Messianic hope blazed up; we can show that the Messianic hope was no part of the theology or expectation of Elijah, Amos, Hosea, and Jeremiah; the historical allusions in the passage are much more easily explicable of the situation in the exile or afterwards; the phrase "the zeal of the Lord of hosts" in ver. 7 is suspicious. The passage contradicts the outlook upon the future which hitherto with great confidence we have ascribed to Isaiah upon the basis of passages of indubitable authenticity.

The problem of xi. 1–9 is simpler on the whole. The first verse refers to a shoot out of the stump of Jesse. It is therefore natural to suppose that the tree of Jesse has been felled, and that the prophecy is written after the end of the Davidic dynasty. This is perhaps not absolutely certain. Skinner[1] says that the

[1] Op. cit., p. 103.

"decay" of the Davidic dynasty presupposed "is not a presupposition in the sense that the prophecy could not have been written until it was an accomplished fact." This is perhaps a possible explanation, but it is to be observed that Skinner helps his case by the substitution of the idea of decay for that of a sudden felling. But a prophecy beginning with the assumption of the felling of the tree of Jesse is very natural after the event; it is very unnatural before the event, without a previous word of explanation. Those who defend Isaiah's authorship are perhaps more or less consciously thinking upon the assumption that it is *a priori* most probable that Isaiah of Jerusalem wrote an oracle which occurs in the eleventh chapter of "Isaiah," but on Skinner's own showing Isaiah did certainly not write xi. 10–16, nor xii. nor xiii–xiv. 23, nor xv. nor xvi. It may, however, fairly be said that if Isaiah gave himself to speculations as to the conditions of life after the judgment, when the earth should be full of the glory of God, as in the song of the seraphim, he might have drawn such a picture as we find in xi. 2–5. Vers. 6–9 on any showing raise difficult problems of exegesis. Several interpretations have been offered. The passage may refer to a belief in the "reconstitution of all things," to "sea change into something new and strange," which the universe may expect in the last days; there is evidence to show that at least in later days some held such a doctrine. Explanations which rationalize the whole and would take the various animal types as symbols of varieties of human beings are less likely. But these verses may quite naturally be taken as a first edition, as it were, of a poem entitled "Paradise Regained," and in that case, more particularly when we are

considering an Oriental poet, we should do well to avoid the rashness of assuming that though the passage is written in verse the words are to be taken literally, not symbolically. In other words, even if it could be shown that Isaiah was probably the author of the passage, no proof would thereby be offered that the crude, supernaturalistic, literal eschatology of far later writers are derived from literal ideas current in the eighth century B.C. in Israel.

In xxxii. 1–5 we have a passage much less obviously open to suspicion from internal evidence. It is the one " Messianic " passage which without improbability might be ascribed to Isaiah. If anywhere he spoke of conditions in the world after the judgment, this is the passage which we may take to describe his thoughts. It is, however, a question whether it is really consistent with the other passages ; at any rate it is plain that no supernatural traits are found in the picture ; indeed this should scarcely be called a " Messianic " passage in the strict sense, for the future is depicted very much in terms of a reformed aristocracy. The passage may or may not be by Isaiah, but there is nothing here inconsistent with the earlier authentic passages.

We conclude, then, with a very high degree of certainty that with the possible exception of xxxii. 1–5 Isaiah taught no doctrine that can be called " Messianic," and that in his outlook upon the future, after the judgment which was to come " in the natural order " and the processes of history, there are no supernatural-eschatological ideas so far as we have yet seen.

(3) We turn to the consideration of a number of passages which raise a complicated problem in the

interpretation of Isaiah. Hitherto we have worked upon the supposition that in Isaiah's picture of the future there comes the divine judgment on the faithless people and the salvation of a remnant. Some of the passages that follow appear in part to bear out these ideas, but in part to predict the destruction of the Assyrians at the gates of Jerusalem. Are we to say that at a certain period Isaiah had come to the conclusion that the whole people was to be the remnant, or that the Assyrian was not to be the rod of chastisement in the hand of God, or what other interpretation might be offered? In this connection Box says[1]: "In the light of Gressmann's epoch-making work on the origin of Israelitish eschatology, the use by the older prophets of traditional eschatological material must certainly be allowed for as a possibility. And this material, as he shows, included an eschatology of bliss and of woe. It is impossible to separate the eschatology of bliss from the eschatology of woe. Both 'belong and correspond to each other like the two shells of a mussel.' The apparent incongruity lies in the fragmentary condition of the traditional material, which material was equally familiar to the prophet and his hearers or readers." Of xxix. 1–8, where this problem appears in an acute form, Skinner[2] denies that it is possible to separate the prophecies of doom from the prophecies of triumph: "They are blended in a psychological unity which appears to us to defy literary analysis." These statements are indeed sufficiently surprising, but it will be best to consider individual passages before discussing them in general.

That Isaiah predicted the doom of Assyria is agreed.

[1] *The Book of Isaiah*, p. 16. [2] Op. cit., p. xlvi.

This is stated clearly in x. 5–15, perhaps to be taken with xiv. 24–7.[1] The Assyrian world-power is the instrument in the hand of God for the punishment of Judah. The commission to Assyria is clear (x. 6), and God has a complete work to perform on Mount Zion, after which the pride of the Assyrian shall be brought low. Assyria is not charged with exceeding the divine commission, but with being unconscious of it and acting in pride. The punishment of Assyria therefore is to follow the harrowing of Judah. The passage is to be dated presumably somewhere between 717 and 701 B.C. The following verses (x. 20–23) concerning the remnant are, as Skinner agrees, not closely connected with the foregoing. They are followed by a section (x. 24–27) indicted to encourage Jerusalem not to be too much afraid of the Assyrian, for their tribulation will soon be over and the Assyrian will be punished. It may indeed be contended that here we see the intermixture of the eschatology of bliss with the eschatology of woe ; but it should be observed that in that case the eschatology of woe seems to have lost its ethical character. Is Judah bidden by Isaiah (of all men !) to make light of the chastisements of Adonai on the ground that they will soon be over ? It should be plain that in vers. 24–7 the Assyrian is no longer in truth regarded as " the rod of mine anger." It is not unnatural to suggest either that " Assyrian " is here used, as would appear sometimes to have been the case, of the Babylonian or some later oppressor, or that with the genuine work of Isaiah there has been mixed the work of one of the prophets of weal, sometimes called the false prophets.

There follows in vers. 28–32 a vivid description of the

[1] So Box, who omits xiv. 25b as a gloss.

advance of an Assyrian army upon Jerusalem. There seems, indeed, to be a note of seriousness, urgency, and terror in the description ; but, as Skinner would have us believe, this is a mere literary device " in order to introduce the assurance that when the invader does come, and the prize is just within his grasp, Jehovah will smite him down," [1] as is shown in vers. 33 f. This must appear a desperate expedient to bring 33 f. into association with the account of the attack. Box wisely heads vers. 33 f. " a fragmentary conclusion " (? to x. 5 f.).

The problem is raised in an acute form in various sections of Chaps. xxviii to xxxiii. In xxviii. 14–22, as we have seen above,[2] the doom of Jerusalem is predicted ; if any are to escape that doom it will be the believing remnant. Moreover, the doom predicted is ascribed to religious and ethical causes. We turn to xxix. 1–8. It is quite certain that vers. 1–4 (beginning " O Ariel, Ariel, city against which David encamped ") predict the rejection and doom of Jerusalem. Adonai himself will fight against her. On the other hand, vers. 5a and b and 7 f. announce the destruction of all those nations that attack Zion in the very moment when their triumph seems within their grasp. Can these two sections be part of the same prophecy ? " That there is a certain inconsistency in the picture," says Box,[3] " is undeniable, but this can be explained when the eschatological character of the language used is rightly estimated." Skinner speaks of a " psychological unity " defying " literary analysis."[4] No one reading the passage naturally can miss the note of unfeigned pathos and tragedy in the opening phrase, " O Ariel,

[1] Op. cit., p. 100.
[2] Vide supra, pp. 154 ff.
[3] Op. cit., pp. 130 f.
[4] Op. cit., p. xlvi.

Ariel," etc. The doom of Ariel is assured in God's moral order ; it is morally inevitable. Suddenly we discover that it is not to be. It looks as if Ariel was to be destroyed ; there has been no repentance, and we know that Ariel ought to be destroyed, but, as a matter of fact, we find that it is the nations attacking Ariel upon whom at the last moment the doom falls. So far from constituting " psychological unity," this would involve a psychological dissociation ; it would involve that the prophet was not able to follow his own simple logic, and that he was not inwardly identified with his own moral principles. This difficulty cannot be met by any " estimation " of the character of the eschatological language, unless we suppose *per absurdum* that a prophet was unable to utter an oracle of woe without tacking on to it as a formal and meaningless addendum an oracle of weal. It may be again insisted here that I am not denying Gressmann's contention that various eschatological ideas of weal and of woe were current in Isaiah's day ; but no evidence has been adduced to show that these ideas of weal and woe, whether separately or together, had been systematized, nor that the prophets took them over wholesale. We are not at liberty lightly to adopt a theory which so jeopardizes our reasonable conviction of the mental and moral stability of Isaiah and the great literary prophets before the exile.

In xxx. 1–17 Isaiah denounces a proposed alliance with Egypt on the ground that such alliances prove distrust in the sovereign power and Providence of Adonai. The leaders of the people have decided upon a military policy, and it will be followed by a military disaster. Judah is a rebellious people ; they will not listen to the instruction of their God ; they bid their

prophets to prophesy smooth things and illusions. Amongst such illusions and smooth things we should certainly place the idea that Jerusalem need have no fear because Adonai would destroy their enemies before their walls. The true policy of Judah is once again proclaimed : " In turning and rest shall ye be saved ; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength, and ye would not." Here is a passage which bears the hall-mark of authenticity, the cardinal doctrine of Isaiah that a nation's destiny depends on faith ; and it seems expressly to deny that the so-called eschatology of weal had any place in the thought or teaching of the true prophet. In xxx. 27–33 the doom of Assyria is foretold ; that, indeed, is part of Isaiah's message, but the authenticity of this particular passage can scarcely be defended. Skinner, following Staerk, supposes that it may have been written by some contemporary of Isaiah lacking his moral insight.[1]

In xxxi. 1–9 we have another instance of this inward dissonance. Vers. 1–4 read naturally : " As little as a lion is turned aside by a party of shepherds will Adonai be turned aside when he comes to fight against his people." [2] Vers. 5–9 are the formal contradiction of this. Are we to suppose that the juxtaposition of these passages is due to an editor, and that Isaiah so changed his mind during the course of his ministry that both oracles can come from him ? We shall be in a better position to answer this question when we have considered what was the prophet's mind during the crisis of 701 B.C.

[1] Op. cit., p. 248.
[2] That עַל in ver. 4 should be translated " against " would never be doubted but that the following verses deny the preceding.

The oracles in Chap. xxxii are suspect; for our present purpose they add little. We observe that a prophecy of doom is placed between two oracles of blessing; it is perhaps noticeable that there is here no reference to the destruction of Assyria.

In the present enquiry it is of great importance for us to determine if we can what was the teaching of Isaiah at the time of Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem in 701 B.C. Has his thought changed since the days of the Syro-Ephraimite war?

Chaps. xxxvi and xxxvii are practically an excerpt from the book of Kings. 2 Kings xviii. 13–16, which narrates the submission of Hezekiah, corroborates Sennacherib's own account of the campaign, and is very significantly omitted from Isaiah. It is by no means easy to fit into the framework of assured facts the narratives of the letter and the Rabshakeh's embassy recorded in Isaiah. The most probable solution of the various difficulties seems to be along the following lines: We cannot doubt that Hezekiah made his submission to Sennacherib and surrendered quantities of plunder, as stated in the Assyrian records; but it is intrinsically improbable that if Sennacherib had taken the trouble to invest Jerusalem and build a rampart against it, he would have been satisfied with anything less than the surrender of the city. It is therefore probable that the investment to which he refers, without alleging that it ended in the capture of the city, took place after the submission of Hezekiah and the surrender of plunder corroborated in 2 Kings xviii. 13–16. It seems best to suppose, then, that at first, with or without some resistance, Hezekiah submitted to Sennacherib, surrendering much plunder; that somewhat later, whether through duplicity or "military

necessity," the demand was made for the surrender of the city also. This was refused, and a detachment of the Assyrian army was detailed off to invest the city. Possibly the demand for the surrender of the city was first made by letter, and then a little later, when that failed, by the appearance of an army. It was at the beginning of the siege that the Assyrians were overtaken by that disaster at which Herodotus hints, and the siege was raised. If such or suchlike were facts, what was Isaiah's attitude to them ?

In xxxvii. 1–7 two verses are ascribed to Isaiah, 6 and 7. Of these the former refers back to the imaginary speech of Rabshakeh in xxxvi. 4–10, 12–20; but ver. 7, even though in the context it must be regarded with some suspicion, is interesting : " I will disquiet him, and when he hears a rumour he will return to his own land ; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land." [1] We have here a categorical statement not based upon any religious principle to the effect that the siege shall come to nothing. The statement corresponds to the oracle during the Syro-Ephraimite war : " It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass." Does it involve, if genuine, any change of mind on Isaiah's part ? It might be that Isaiah had seen so great a repentance in the people that he thought the doom would not now overtake them, or it might be that, as in the case of the siege threatened by Rezin and Pekah, he realized that this at least was not to be the occasion of Judah's doom. We cannot at present decide between those alternatives ; but in any case it is very noticeable that there is no thought here of the miraculous destruction of Assyria before the gates of Jerusalem !

[1] Box.

In xxxvii. 21–35 we are given what purports to be a long address by Isaiah on the occasion of the receipt of Sennacherib's letter; but this address falls into three parts—first a lyrical taunt at the Assyrian, vers. 22b–9; second an oracle to Hezekiah, vers. 30–2; third a prediction of the immunity of the city and the retreat of the enemy, vers. 33–5. It is generally admitted that vers. 22b–9 are not a poem of Isaiah dating from this period, but we must consider the possibility that vers. 30–2, 33–5 may contain sayings of Isaiah at this crisis.

The oracle in xxxvii. 30–2 asserts that it will be two years at least before agricultural life can be fully re-established, that a remnant should escape the present trial and flourish in the land. Such ideas are not unnatural to Isaiah, but it must remain most doubtful whether these words are the message of Isaiah in this crisis, for they involve that Isaiah predicted that Sennacherib's siege would bring such disaster that the survivors would be but a remnant; this he might well have taught, but the oracle contradicts xxxvii. 33 f. with xxxvii. 7, which might be regarded as the word of Isaiah at this time. Vers. 33 f. assert that not an arrow shall be shot in the city and the Assyrian shall return by the way he came. At the same time there is a difficulty here in that the words must have been uttered, if at all, prior to the investment of the city; for we cannot believe that when Hezekiah was shut up "like a bird in a cage" no arrow was cast into the city; moreover, a mound was certainly erected against it. These stories from the book of Kings rest upon an insecure foundation. We may, if we like, accept either xxxvii. 7, 33 f. or xxxvii. 30–2 as expressing Isaiah's teaching at this

time, but in neither case should we be given any reason for supposing that a fundamental change of outlook had overtaken the prophet. Of a Messianic age about to dawn, of a destruction of the Assyrians at the gates of Jerusalem, there is no word; either Isaiah simply stated that the doom of Judah was not yet, or he asserted that this was the doom of Judah, but a remnant would survive.

In this connection we turn finally to consider the very complicated problems of xxii. 1–14, which is presumably but not certainly to be treated as a literary unity. Linguistically it would be possible to regard the whole passage as a prophecy of the future, but the insuperable objection to this is that we cannot suppose the prophet to have predicted the extermination of the people for a sin it had not yet committed. Therefore we must try to seek an historical occasion for the oracle, and it is natural to connect it in some way with the attack of Sennacherib. Skinner's interpretation is attractive: the people of Jerusalem, he supposes, have gone up to the housetops with rejoicings to watch the retreat of the Assyrian army. But, says the prophet, this is no time for rejoicing, for no glory accrues to Jerusalem for this; she has lost many men, and they perished ingloriously on the gallows, not in battle; such an army as appeared melted away in fright. As for the prophet, he will be left in mourning for the spoiling of the people. Vers. 5–8 are then to be taken as history or an imaginative description of an assault on the city; vers. 9–11 describe the terror of the city at the Assyrian blockade and the people's frantic efforts for the city's defence; trust is put not in Adonai, but in fortifications. In vers. 12–14 the great deliverance has come, but instead

of taking it aright with repentance and godly fear the people have given themselves to senseless rejoicing. This final utter inability to see in events the hand of Adonai argues an insensibility of spirit which can only be visited with a final and irrevocable doom.

But there are serious objections to this interpretation. Ver. 4b, "for the destruction" of my people, is only explained on the difficult assumption that the prophet's eye has begun to turn from the past to the future. Vers. 5–7 express the prophet's expectation of an Assyrian return, but by a violent change vers. 8–11 refer to the past. Ver. 12 is interpreted of Adonai's call to repentance on the day of the Assyrian departure. In spite of that there is rejoicing; but the motive for the rejoicing, strangely enough, is that "to-morrow we die"! Skinner has to assume that the people were aware this was but a temporary respite.

Vers. 1 and 13 are cited to show that the passage contemplates a deliverance in the near past, but *prima facie* the eating and drinking, "for to-morrow we die," is not strong evidence for a deliverance, and it might be argued that ver. 1 is no more evidence of deliverance than was Belshazzar's feast on the night when, according to Daniel, Babylon was taken. It is therefore easier to suppose that the whole passage dates from the days of the siege prior to the departure of the Assyrians. It is a dreadful day—a day of Adonai's, of tumult and trampling and confusion. The prophet gives himself to mourning over the doom of the city; the people are aware of the weakness of their defences; they have done what they can to repair them, but defence is hopeless. Instead of putting their trust in Adonai, in whose hands are all the affairs

of earth and against whom the Assyrian has no power, the people have given themselves up to desperate jollification, to feasting and drowning their cares in drink, "for to-morrow we die." For such frivolity and godlessness you shall die, says the prophet. If we so interpret the passage, it will appear that Isaiah did not foresee that the Assyrian would melt away from before the city, and we should suppose that xxxvii. 30–2, if any verses from that chapter, give us the thought and words of Isaiah.

(4) At this stage it is important to consider Isaiah's alleged doctrine of the inviolability of Mount Zion. This doctrine is carefully and moderately stated by Skinner.[1] He admits that early in his career the prophet predicted the destruction of the city (iii. 26, v. 14–17, xxxii. 9–14), but afterwards he abandoned it until the very end (xxii. 1–14), when, disillusioned, he returned to his first message. It is certainly a significant admission that the prophet only held this doctrine through the middle portion of his ministry (though by far the greater part), and that it was later abandoned by him.

The first clear enunciation of the doctrine Skinner finds in xiv. 32. It is natural to suppose that one of the Assyrian kings has died, and that the Philistine cities are as usual desirous to revolt, and are seeking alliances with this in mind. They send ambassadors to Jerusalem; Isaiah, in the name of Adonai, gives them a message to take home. He tells them that Adonai has founded Zion, and in her shall the afflicted of His people take refuge. What, then, is the meaning of this? Skinner says[2]: "The words are of great significance as showing how the two ideas of

[1] Op. cit., pp. lxvii ff. [2] Op. cit., p. 130.

the remnant and of the inviolability of Jerusalem combined in Isaiah's mind at a particular period of his career." But in this particular context what would be the relevance of a doctrine of the inviolability of Zion? If Isaiah were inviting the Philistines to revolt from Assyria, or if Jerusalem were in danger of being attacked by the Philistines, there would be some point in the assurance that Mount Zion, by the defence of Adonai, was inexpugnable; but such is not the situation here contemplated. Again, is it natural to take "the afflicted of his people" as referring to the remnant? What answer would this be to the Philistines? Would they understand this obscure allusion? The phrase "the afflicted of his people" is certainly strange,[1] but it may well be taken of the people as a whole. *A priori* what we might expect Isaiah to say is that Adonai has founded Zion, and if the Judeans will but trust in Him, He will provide for them and for their city. The foundation of Zion, the city "against which David encamped," is clearly not to be taken literally. The statement seems closely parallel to the oracle that Adonai is laying or has laid in Zion a foundation-stone. If we take the precious foundation-stone and the waters of Shiloah and here Zion has variants of the same idea, as well we may, this passage naturally falls into line with Isaiah's fundamental doctrine. But Skinner finds the inviolability doctrine in the passage about the foundation-stone (xxviii. 16). He says that the stone is "obviously" a symbol for the remnant; otherwise we are involved in the difficult distinction between the temple mountain and the rest of Jerusalem. In any event it is hazardous to find any literal inviolability of Zion in the passage, for the

[1] The words "the afflicted of" are bracketed by Box.

significance of the saying is clearly connected with the motto indicating the assurance and security of those who believe. The passage cannot be taken to mean that owing to the inviolability of Mount Zion those who do not believe will be as safe as those who do! Such a view would make difficulties and inconsistencies where there are none. Further passages are cited by Skinner (x, xxix. 1–8, xxxi. 4–9). All these have been considered above; at best they might be regarded as corroborative evidence if in any probably or reasonably authentic passage the doctrine of Mount Zion's inviolability could have been indicated. In xxii. 1–14 (written, as Skinner believes, in a moment of great disappointment) the doctrine has lost all hold upon the prophet's mind. The doctrine, then, on Skinner's showing, was a delusion which misled the prophet through the greater part of his ministry. It is true that Skinner himself comes to a more moderate conclusion. "We cannot resist the impression," he says, "that the prophet's view may have varied within certain limits from time to time, being now more ideal and now more empirical; so that the whole conception may not have been to his mind the hard-and-fast dogma which it has become in the hands of some of his commentators." But is such a conclusion any tribute to the insight or even to the intelligence of the prophet? If Zion stands in some of the oracles as a symbol of spiritual realities, that is one thing; the doctrine that a particular mountain will be supernaturally defended is another, belonging to a different religious world. It does not seem probable that such a seer as Isaiah would have halted between these two opinions.

On two particular occasions—during the Syro-

Ephraimite war certainly, during Sennacherib's attack possibly, we may be right to suppose that Isaiah asserted that the city would not be taken; but the doctrine of the inviolability of Mount Zion as a religious principle is, I believe, as little to be found in Isaiah as the doctrine of a supernatural destruction of the enemy at the gates of the city. Isaiah's supernaturalism was of a very different quality; the safety of the people was contingent upon righteousness and faith.

(5) We turn to a note upon Isaiah's remnant doctrine. Isaiah was a thoroughgoing supernaturalist, as we have seen, in the sense that he believed history to be plastic in the hands of God. The remnant, as is plain from many passages, was to be a remnant of faith. It is not *a priori* impossible that Isaiah should have taught that every individual believer, being a member of the remnant, should survive the catastrophe that was imminent upon the impenitent nation. But have we any evidence of this? It seems likely that the fate of individuals scarcely presented itself to him as a problem; for in spite of the fact that a strictly personal religion is involved in his doctrine of faith, it seems as true of Isaiah as of the great prophets who preceded him that the subject of religion is the community rather than the individual.[1] If Judah, the chosen vineyard of Adonai, will bring forth no fruit, Adonai must find another vineyard; if Judah will not be the people of God, then through the remnant God must raise up another people. Isaiah was

[1] This truth is often stated, but it is liable to exaggeration. Personal and individual piety and religion are presupposed in the J and E patriarchal narratives as well as in the teaching of the early literary prophets. Dr. Naish points out to me that there is no word in classical Hebrew for "a single individual"; איש מהם is the nearest approach.

not concerned with the fate of individuals; the remnant doctrine is subsidiary to his intuitive assurance that one day the glory of Adonai must fill the whole earth. This could only be through a faithful community; therefore there must be a remnant.

Very significant is viii. 16, with its reference to "my disciples." It is becoming customary to explain the prophet's outlook upon the future by reference to floating current eschatological ideas of weal and woe, but more light is to be obtained, it may be, from consideration of the fact that Isaiah began to gather about him a company of the faithful, a Church of believers; his outlook upon the future is likely to have been coloured by this, that in that little company he already possessed the foretaste of the world that was to be; but throughout his primary concern was for the glory of Adonai, not for the fate of individual men.

We have now in the main covered the passages upon which might be built a theory of the prophet's "eschatology." According to common interpretations Isaiah is supposed to have taught the inviolability of Mount Zion, the supernatural destruction of the enemy at the gates of Jerusalem and the near approach of the Messiah and the Messianic age. We have found grounds, both textual and theological, for supposing that none of these doctrines is proper to Isaiah. Amos knew the popular "eschatology of weal," the expectation of a Day of Adonai and a good time coming for his people. Amos did not merely adopt another current eschatology of woe; he took the idea of the Day of Adonai, and asserted it would be a day of darkness and of judgment; this doctrine is accepted and enforced by Isaiah in his turn. The

three doctrines of inviolability, supernatural victory, and the Messiah may perhaps have been current in Isaiah's time; if so, they belonged to that circle of ideas which Isaiah rejected—ideas of fantasy, not of ethical and religious insight. In respect of the Messianic idea I am not intending to assert that, belonging as it does to the "eschatology of weal," it cannot under any circumstances have a moral and religious value; that would not be true. We may regard the Messianic passages incorporated in the book of Isaiah, like some of those occurring in Enoch, as "inspired" and spiritually true, but that can only be if they be regarded as springing from a different background than the lifetime of Isaiah, and as being in that later, post-exilic age ethically conditioned. If Judah had come to believe that through the sufferings she had gone through and the lessons she had learnt "her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of Adonai's hand double for all her sins," then the expectation of the Messianic age has in it ethical and religious elements impossible in the age of Isaiah, whose work it was to proclaim to his people that their sin was not pardoned, and they must expect the judgments of their God. In Isaiah the Messianic passages most strictly so-called appear to be expectations, not for the remnant, but for the nation as a whole; it is this which is inconsistent with all Isaiah's thought, whether of the coming judgment on the nation or of the contingency of history upon faith.

The spiritual stature of Isaiah appears in bold relief when these alien elements have been removed. As a young man Isaiah in vision "saw Adonai," saw Him enthroned in Zion as the true king of His people, present in their midst, their God, yet the God of the

whole earth, awful in His power and holiness. Isaiah had the experience of sins forgiven, and heard the call to be the mouthpiece of Adonai to his people. To this covenanted work he seems to have been entirely dedicated through the long stirring years of his ministry. His message in essence was simple; it concerned the glory, the holiness, the nearness, the all-sufficiency of God. To Isaiah the supreme reality, the only power in all the world, was the living God. He believed that the fate of his people depended not at all upon the propinquity of Assyria, but alone upon the religious attitude of the king and nation. His faith was not a speculative conviction of the omnipotence of God; it was a practical belief in God's omnipotence brought into closest connection with foreign politics. In the history of the world Isaiah saw the working of a moral principle. This world is a moral order; social evil, pride and self-sufficiency bring inevitable destruction; the only way of salvation and wisdom for man or nation lies in humility and faith. God's presence with His people, His power and all-sufficiency alone were sure, and God would provide for those who trusted in Him. Through them, moreover, the glory of God should be manifested on earth, for the day was coming when Adonai, whom He had seen seated upon His lofty throne, should rise up therefrom in wrath and judgment against all that was iniquitous and all that was proud and lifted up, and through the nucleus of His Church should found a new community upon the earth. This is religion, not politics and not vain hope.

CHAPTER VI

JEREMIAH

It is quite certain that Jeremiah predicted the captivity, but what did he expect to follow in the further future? Did he anticipate a return of the Jews from Babylonia? Did he think that the captivity of the ten northern tribes would be turned again? Did he suppose that the two kingdoms would be once again reunited under a Messianic ruler?

I submit, not without hesitation, that it is a mistake to suppose that Jeremiah predicted a return from exile either for the northern or the southern tribes. In this connection several passages fall to be considered. In xxxii. 6 ff. we have the very instructive incident of the buying of the plot of land at Anathoth, the motive for which is the oracle (ver. 15), "houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land." The destruction of Jerusalem, then, was not to synchronize with the end of the world. Who were they to be that should yet buy and sell land in Palestine? There is nothing "apocalyptic" or "eschatological" about the transfer of land. What kind of future is it to which Jeremiah looks forward? Before we can answer these questions we must consider further passages, and first of all the letter to the exiles.[1] The exiles are bidden to build houses and

[1] Chap. xxix. 5 ff.

dwell in them, to plant gardens and eat the fruit of them, to seek the peace of Babylon and to pray for it, for even in that far country they shall have fellowship with God. A return from exile is quite definitely predicted in vers. 10 and 14, but it is very highly doubtful whether these verses can be part of the original letter, with the exception of the first clause of ver. 14. Skinner translates [1]:

Build houses and dwell therein;
Plant orchards and eat their fruit;
Take you wives and beget children,
That you may wax and not diminish.
And seek the good of the land
To which I have led you captive;
And pray for it to Yahweh,
For with its welfare is yours bound up.

For well do I know the thoughts
That I think concerning you—
Thoughts of weal and not of ill—
To give you a future of hope.
When you pray to Me I will hear;
When you seek Me you shall find:
When you seek Me with all your heart,
I shall be found of you, saith Yahweh.[2]

That ver. 14, apart from the first clause, is an editorial expansion is generally admitted, but the authenticity of ver. 10 finds supporters,[3] and Skinner, though he does not translate it, seems to leave its authenticity an open question.[4] The poem ends with a great climax that when the exiled people seek the Lord,

[1] *Prophecy and Religion*, pp. 287 f.
[2] The metre I take to be 3 : 3, except that the poem begins with a 2 : 2 : 2. Read *shalomkem* in ver. 7.
[3] E.g. Erbt.
[4] Op. cit., pp. 252, 295.

they shall find Him, and when they pray to Him He will hear. That is suitable and magnificent, but if the climax in the prophet's mind had been the return from exile, to which *ex hypothesi* he had referred in ver. 10, the poem could not well have ended without a further reference to the exile. The prophecy of the seventy years is on any showing difficult. It is easiest and most natural to assume that a floating, anonymous theologumenon has here been ascribed to the great prophet without justification. In any event, it is clear that Jeremiah does not foresee the actual future ; for had he foreseen the work of Cyrus, he could not have said that the welfare of Israel was bound up with the welfare of Babylon. Moreover, on no showing does ver. 10, with its seventy years' promise, make sense after ver. 7, for the promise of ver. 7, in the true prophetic manner, is conditional ; the prediction in ver. 10 is unconditional. The plain meaning of the poem is that the Jews are to be reconciled to their lot, to the will of God revealed in their punishment ; they are to view the Babylonians not as tyrants and enemies, but as friends ; they are to settle down and make themselves a new home in Babylon and identify themselves with the good of the people amongst whom they live. In taking this attitude, they will find that the exile is not what they supposed, an alienation from their God, but that in the far land, without temple or rite or sacrifice, they may be in communion with the God of the Fathers, and He would dwell in the midst of them and be with them. Such a message does not exclude the possibility of a return, but no reference seems here made to it.

Does this letter to the exiles involve a change in the prophet's own thought ? Like his predecessors, he

had predicted the doom of the nation in just recompense for its sins. Is it not as if one should warn a wrongdoer that he should end by being hanged, and then, when his doom is about to overtake him, one should say to him that, after all, if he took this aright, death should not be the end, but rather the entry into new life? The question is, Does Jeremiah regard the situation in vers. 12 f. as something less desirable than the old status when the people had the temple and the ancient rites and sacraments? We can hardly suppose so. To be heard by God when they prayed, to find Him when they sought Him—things which in that ancient world often seemed inextricably bound up with the sacrifices and the duly appointed rites—constituted the very heart and essence of religion, not to the prophet only, but also to his hearers; for ceremonies and sacrifices were simply means to this end. Having their homes in Babylon these many years, and possessing their God, why should Israel even desire a return, except for political reasons? We cannot answer the question whether Jeremiah's thought had developed and changed in this matter till we have sought to gauge his attitude to the reforms of Josiah years before.

Meanwhile we turn to other passages bearing on our immediate problem.

We may first consider the poems in Chap. iii. Our difficulties here are considerable. It seems best to take iii. 1–5, 19 f., 21–5, with iv. 1–4, as belonging together if not as part of one long poem.[1] We may note that the keynote of the section is Return (שׁוּב); this is part of Jeremiah's inheritance from Isaiah. It

[1] Welch, *The Book of Jeremiah translated into Colloquial English*, and Volz in vol. x of Sellin's *Kommentar*.

is plain that in all this section the term is used of a spiritual return from infidelity, not of a physical return from exile. In view of this it would seem reasonable to give the same interpretation to the word " return " wherever it occurs in Jeremiah, unless the context makes it clear that a physical return is meant.[1]

Chap. iii. 6–13 go together. Here vers. 6–10 seem to be prose and vers. 11–13 verse ; it may, therefore, be surmised that only in vers. 11–13 do we find the prophet's own words, but for our present purpose this is immaterial. The prophet turns to the north and calls on Israel to return. The north might apply either to the northern kingdom or to the land whither the northern exiles had been carried in captivity. But it should be observed that there is no explicit mention of a return from captivity, for ver. 12 is at least as well explained of a spiritual return. Indeed, can the passage be sensibly interpreted of a literal return from exile ? It would involve that the exiles who had gone into captivity some century before still existed as a recognizable unit and still maintained touch with their old country and their old religion, such that an appeal to them might hope for some response. Have we any reason for supposing that such was the actual situation ? We should consider what the exile actually meant. According to the records of Sargon, he took into captivity 27,290 persons. The Assyrian kings were by no means given to minimizing their exploits, so we may reasonably take this to be an outside figure. Amongst those deported were women and children, so that the number of families will be far less than the total number. Unfortunately we have no

[1] See infra, pp. 188 f.

real knowledge as to the population of Palestine prior to the exile. The figures given in Scripture (as, for instance, in 2 Sam. xxiv. 9) are very unreliable, and the MSS. readings vary. Budde [1] guesses that the effectives of the northern kingdom in the time of David may have been 100,000; but this is simply a guess. In Judges v. 5 the armed men in Israel would seem to be computed at 40,000. There can be little doubt that in the eighth century the number would have been much greater. It is reasonably clear, therefore, that the deportation of 27,290 persons from Samaria—important indeed as it would be to the life of the country, its leadership, its wealth, and its recuperative power—would yet leave the vast majority of the population Israelite, or at least of that mixed stock which we call Israelite. Indeed, as Stade [2] points out, this is really proved by the fact that in 720 B.C. Samaria was in league with Hamath, Arpad and Damascus against the Assyrians. This we learn not from Scripture, but from Sargon's inscriptions, and this insurrection would appear to have been followed by a further deportation. We talk of "the lost ten tribes," and we assume without warrant that the Assyrians virtually depopulated the land and refilled it with settlers from elsewhere; but even if the second deportation was as extensive as the first, the land would still in no sense be depopulated. As a matter of fact, it is doubtful whether the population was greatly changed anywhere but in the city of Samaria itself. Moreover, Josiah is said to have promulgated his reform movement in the central, as well as in the southern, country (2 Kings xxiii. 15–19), and he led his troops all across Ephraim before fighting at

[1] Ad 2 Sam. xxiv. 9.

[2] *Geschichte*, i, p. 601.

Megiddo. Therefore he was *de facto* king of central Palestine. We now know that Psamtik I drove out the Assyrian garrisons by 650 B.C. at latest; by 616 B.C. Nineveh was invested (it fell in 612 B.C.). Therefore the union of north and south under one king belonged to the natural outlook of men in Josiah's time.[1]

From Chap. iii. we turn to Chaps. xxx and xxxi. In these chapters we find some *prima facie* evidence of the prediction of a return, but the question is complicated by doubts as to the authenticity of these chapters. So conservative a scholar as Peake ascribes the whole of Chap. xxx to the hand of the supplementer; he ascribes to Jeremiah of Chap. xxxi only vers. 2–6, 15–22, 31–4. Volz, on the other hand, takes the whole of the two chapters, with the exception of a few verses, as one long poem. As in a mediæval triptych, he thinks, Jeremiah has put together a rich variety of scenes illustrating the return of Ephraim.[2] Any argument, therefore, based on Chap. xxx must be very tentative. We may note that the two verses in the chapter which positively require a physical return are vers. 3 and 10. Both verses are accepted by Volz and H. Schmidt and largely rejected by other scholars. Their acceptance or rejection has not been in respect of their reference to a physical return; if, then, in regard to more certainly authentic passages we can show that Jeremiah has no such expectation, the argument against the authenticity of these verses will thereby be strengthened.

We are in somewhat similar difficulties with regard

[1] If iii. 19–25 be taken of the northern kingdom, as is quite possible, it is plain that the invocation to return from an involuntary exile would be meaningless, and a spiritual return of those still in the land must be intended.

[2] *Kom.*, p. 283.

to Chap. xxxi. It is highly probable that vers. 7–14, so reminiscent of Isa. ii, are not by Jeremiah, but the presumption is very strongly in favour of the authenticity of vers. 2–6, 15 f., 18–20, 21 f. We shall discuss later the new covenant doctrine in vers. 31 ff. We here consider vers. 2–6 and 15–22. We first ask: What is meant in ver. 2 by the phrase "the people which were left of the sword have found grace (or found grace) in the wilderness, even Israel when he went to find him rest"? It has been urged that here the exile of the northern kingdom is intended. The wilderness is indeed a strange metaphor for the place of exile; it might, however, be justified by a sub-reference to the period of Moses. At the same time it certainly cannot be said that the passage must refer to the northern exile, and the expression "hath found grace," even if we take it as a prophetic perfect, is remarkable of the northern exiles. Were they still a community, still maintaining the old faith in such degree that a religious revival and repentance could be expected?

A much more difficult passage for our present thesis is xxxi. 15–17. We may indeed suspect ver. 17 (so apparently Skinner), but ver. 16 clearly predicts the return from the land of the enemy. It is natural to assume that the return of the northern exiles is intended, but for our present purpose it is no easier to take the view sometimes maintained that Jeremiah has in mind the captives from whose company he was released at Ramah. Skinner thus translates ver. 16[1]:

> Refrain thy voice from weeping,
> Thine eyes from tears!
> For a guerdon awaits thy labour—
> Their return from the enemy's land.

[1] Op. cit., p. 301.

But this reading is open to serious objection on metrical grounds. It seems clear that Skinner takes the metre of the whole poem to be: 3 : 2 ; 3 : 2 ; 3 : 2 ; 3 : 3. That such a metre is absolutely impossible one dare hardly venture to say, but it is in a very high degree improbable. Erbt, on the other hand, reads [1]:

Hark! In Ramah | is heard lamentation, | bitter weeping; ||
Rachel weeps, | refusing comfort | for her children because they are not; ||
Stay thy voice | from weeping (and from lamentation), | and thine eyes from tears, ||
For there is a guerdon for thy labour, | and there is a hope for thy future. ||

Here the metre is: 2 : 2 : 2 ; 2 : 2 : 2 ; 2 : 2 : 2 ; 3 : 3. This is open to no objection as metre, though it should be noted that the words "and from lamentation" have been added *metri gratia*. Skinner's version seems to me on metrical grounds almost impossible; Erbt's reconstruction, on the other hand, is eminently probable in a case where certainty is unattainable, and Erbt's version involves no reference to a return. We may at least say that up to the present we have found no unequivocal instance of a prediction of a physical return from exile in the thought of Jeremiah.

Vers. 18–20 are a poem almost built on the idea of a "return," but it does not necessarily, or even probably, refer to a literal return. Is it likely that Jeremiah would have written in this vague and indefinite way if in reality he had before his mind the stupendous miracle of a deliverance from exile for the northern people? Moreover, as we have seen, *shub* was one of the key-words of Jeremiah's thought as of Isaiah's, and unless cause can in any place be

[1] *Jeremia und seine Zeit*, p. 289.

shown to the contrary, it is to be taken spiritually, not literally.

We came now to xxxi. 21 f. The first verse is very difficult. Why should guide-posts be set up by travellers? and is the word rightly translated "guide-posts"? Duhm thinks the reference is to a spiritual marking of the way that led to exile. Peake stigmatizes this as "rather artificial"; so perhaps it is, in which case we can make nothing of the text. A literal return in this passage I think may be ruled out; for what sense would there be in suggesting that the exiles had for a long time been hesitating whether or no to return to their cities? What option had they in the matter? On the other hand, what can "turn again to these thy cities" possibly mean apart from a literal return? This leads us again to point out that Skinner's translation involves that in a poem of 3 : 2 metre there is one 3 : 3 passage, which is as unlikely as possible. It will be noted that the use of "these" (*'eleh*) without the article is peculiar, and the LXX reads: "Return to thy cities with mourning" (*penthousa* = *'abelah*). We may reasonably say that on metrical grounds the present text must be wrong, and the obvious correction is to read "return in mourning" or "with penitence," omitting all reference to the "cities." This correction is justified on its own merits, and it incidentally removes the absurdity of inviting involuntary exiles to return. "We observe, then," says Skinner,[1] "throughout the series a fixed expectation of a return of exiled Israelites." On the contrary, we seem to have come to a point of very considerable uncertainty and doubt as to whether the prophet has really a word to say about a literal return from exile.

[1] Op. cit., p. 306.

His interest in the land of Ephraim is undoubted, but if we bear in mind that only a comparatively small, though important, part of the northern kingdom went into exile, and that substantially "the ten tribes" were still in their ancient habitations, we shall incline to the view that Jeremiah is throughout concerned with the repentance and restitution of those still in Ephraim, with a spiritual return to Adonai and not a physical return from exile. So difficult is the theory that Jeremiah looked for the literal return of the northern exiles that some scholars have even held that Jeremiah looks to the restoration of Ephraim by the return of the exiled Judeans!

In connection with this problem it is very instructive to note the uses of the various parts of the verb *shub* (turn, bring back) in Jeremiah; it is used in all manner of connections, occurring perhaps some eighty times in those parts of Jeremiah normally regarded as possibly or probably authentic. In most cases the use needs no comment; but, if we may provisionally accept Peake's estimate of authentic passages, we may note that, apart from the memoirs of Baruch, the verb is used nineteen or twenty times of a spiritual or moral return; moreover, in nine of these instances the verb is used absolutely—that is, without further explanatory words—of moral or spiritual return; these passages are iii. 7, 12, 22; v. 3; viii. 5; xxxiv. 15, 16, with xxxi. 18, 19. It is true there are a few, but a surprisingly few, passages where the verb is apparently used of a return from exile on the part of Samaria or Jerusalem. Apart from passages already considered, we may note xxiii. 3, xxxii. 37, xxxiii. 7, but not one of these will bear the weight of an argument, for all are regarded with reason as being either editorial amplifications

or as late additions.[1] To these finally we may add xxxii. 44 and xxiv. 1 ff. In regard to the first of these, we note that the authorized English version translates, "I will cause their captivity to return"; but this is not necessary; indeed, it may fairly be argued that this is a paraphrase rather than a translation. Welch renders, "I will turn their fortunes,"[2] and that this is legitimate, if not necessary, is shown by Job xlii. 10. With regard to the second passage—namely, the oracle of the figs in Chap. xxiv.—it is difficult or impossible to attain to certainty. Welch says guardedly: "The oracle has been somewhat overlaid with later material."[3] The question is really whether the original oracle was in prose or verse; that much of it, as we have it, is prose there can be no doubt. Schmidt, it is true,[4] prints the most of it as metrical, but how he so reads the Hebrew text I cannot discover. I regard as by far the most plausible the reconstruction suggested by Erbt.[5] The oracle would then run like this:

Then said unto me the Lord, | what art thou seeing, Jeremiah? ||
And I said figs, | the good figs, | good exceedingly; ||
And the naughty, naughty exceedingly, | so as not to be eaten for badness. ||
(And the Lord's word came to me:)
Even as these good figs, | do I look on the captivity of Judah; ||
But as the naughty figs will I throw away | them that dwell in the land of Egypt. ||[6]

[1] Cf. Welch. [2] Similarly Volz. [3] Op. cit., p. 60.
[4] *S.A.T.*, pp. 325 f. [5] Op. cit., p. 124.
[6] The metre is thus 3 : 3; 2 : 2 : 2; 3 : 3; 3 : 3; 3 : 3. Erbt reads *'agir* with the LXX for the *'ethen* of MT. in ver. 8. The only alteration I have made is to read "Jeremiah" with MT. in ver. 3.

On the whole we may conclude at this stage that the cumulative evidence is considerable to show that Jeremiah predicted no literal or physical return from exile. We turn now to an important general consideration.

We may first consider that Jeremiah's normal and absolute sense of the verb *shub* ("to return") is closely connected with his doctrine of sin as something inward, unnatural and almost incredible. That a people should forsake its God was a thing almost unthinkable; it was as if a man would choose a broken, leaky cistern when there was a "fountain of springing waters" at hand (ii. 10 ff.). The iniquity of Israel is as unnatural as the failure of a tree to bring forth fruit after its kind (ii. 21). "Can a maid forget her ornaments or a bride her sash? Yet my people have forgotten Me" (ii. 32). A man may indeed slip, but how unnatural that he should not pick himself up (viii. 4). Like the instinct that brings the birds home in due season should be, and is naturally, the instinct that brings man back to God (viii. 7). Nature is constant; the snows never fail on Lebanon; its streams are never dried up, but man is inconstant (xviii. 14). Sin seems ineradicable. The Ethiopian can as little change his skin or the leopard his spots as Israel can turn to righteousness (xiii. 23). Sin, then, is an unnatural and inward perversion of the soul; it is in no sense a matter to be dealt with by oblations and atonements; only a change of heart can suffice (xxxi. 31 ff.).[1] Moreover, neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision (iv. 4, ix. 25). No trust is to be put in any externals, not even in the Temple (vii. 2 ff.). As for the traditional sacrificial system, the God

[1] Vide infra, pp. 207 ff.

of Israel will have none of it (vi. 20, vii. 22). Even in exile man is not cut off from the living voice of prophecy; even there man may seek God and find Him, pray to Him and be heard. Here we see a notion of religion absolutely divorced from political conditions —a religion inward, spiritual, personal. It has not sufficiently been recognized that Jeremiah's letter to the exiles is, as it were, a first draft of Paul's letter to the Galatians, written six hundred years before the time. A profound spiritual question is here raised: What interest could Jeremiah have in a literal return? To him it would be a political, not a religious question, a matter of a great indifference so far as religion was concerned. In Jeremiah comes to flower the religion of Moses; viewed as a spiritual ascent the Old Testament concludes with Jeremiah.

(2) Hitherto our result has been mainly negative. Jeremiah, it would seem, did not predict a return from exile. What, then, did he anticipate? Duhm [1] takes the view that at one time Jeremiah hoped for a return, but this hope he ultimately abandoned, and that in what is presumably the last oracle we have from him we see him looking to the future without hope of any kind. This is the oracle to Baruch (xlv. 4). It predicts a period of trouble and evil upon all mankind, but Baruch receives the assurance that his own life shall be preserved. Here two points are to be observed, first that there is nothing in this coming evil upon mankind which is inconsistent with the prophecy that houses and lands should yet again be bought and sold in Jerusalem, and second that the promise to Baruch is inconsistent with the expectation of a sudden "apocalyptic"

[1] *Israel's Propheten*, 2nd ed., p. 249.

judgment bringing the present world order to an end. But can it be that earlier in his life Jeremiah had held more "apocalyptic" notions? In support of such a theory might be quoted one of the songs in the "Scythian" cycle (iv. 23–6). This poem is described by Skinner as "a vision of chaos," and the poem is often taken to signify that in vision the poet sees that "the primeval chaos has resumed its sway." [1] Skinner translates [2]:

I looked to the earth—and behold a chaos!
To the heavens—and their light was gone.
I looked to the hills—and lo, they quivered,
And all the mountains shook.
I looked—and behold, no man was there,
And all the birds of heaven were flown.
I looked to the cornland—and lo, a desert,
And all its cities were razed away.

It is not unnatural that a strong apocalyptic tinge has been suspected here, and therefore it has sometimes been supposed that the poem is not by Jeremiah. But this is a wrong interpretation, as I suppose, of the passage. It should be observed that the poem, as translated by Skinner, doubtless correctly, is in regular 4 : 3 metre. Therefore we must omit *wabohu* in ver. 23. *Tohu wabohu* is a phrase familiar to us from the priestly narrative of the Creation, but *tohu* by itself does not necessarily, nor even probably, mean the universal chaos out of which the cosmos was formed. What prevents our supposing that the poet has only Palestine in mind? The word translated "earth" may as well mean Palestine as the whole world. The darkening of the sky is a natural poetical figure for desolation and destruction, nor are we bound to

[1] Peake, ad loc. [2] Op. cit., p. 37.

suppose that a wider sphere than the Palestinian sky is intended. The quivering and shaking of hills and mountains might indeed be taken literally, and the notion of universal chaos might be intended, but in this case, it might be said, we should have a strange and unimaginative hysteron-proteron ; for if a literal universal chaos had indeed come again, there would be no hills nor mountains to be shaken. Again, in the context, " its cities " in ver. 26 can only refer to the cities of the cornland ; but not even Jerusalem, much less the cities of the whole world, could properly be so described. It is therefore natural and fitting to suppose that Jeremiah, in this as in other songs of the same cycle, is describing in poetical imagery the actual devastation of Palestine or of the richer part of it by the invaders. Indeed, even if we take the poem, as is usually done, as symbolizing a universal chaos come again, the language must be taken as metaphorical, not literal, for no one who ascribes this poem to Jeremiah doubts that it is one of the " Scythian " cycle, and no one supposes Jeremiah to have thought it was in the power of the Scythians or any other human enemy to reduce the universe to the condition it was in before there was plant or beast or light or man !

Jeremiah, then, expected a period of great suffering upon all mankind—not a destruction of the universe, but a time through which a few individuals should be given their life " for a prey," and after that " houses and lands " should again be bought and sold ; some kind of normal human life would again be possible. But some have thought that, looking to the far future, Jeremiah's hopes were rosier than this. Skinner thus devotes a chapter to " the Messianic king." He

admits, however, that of the so-called Messianic passages in Jeremiah the brief oracle (xxiii. 5 f.) is the only one which can with any show of reason be regarded as authentic, and even this is highly doubtful.[1] If we could assume the existence of an accepted belief in the universal sway of a supernatural Messianic king, and if we could assume that the *Ṣemaḥ* was an accepted title for such (for neither of which things have we found any evidence[2]), this passage would not be inconsistent with such a belief. But, naturally interpreted, it would mean no more than that there should be a righteous and just king who should rule over a united Israel in peace and security. This is a very sober outlook upon the future. It is not unlikely that Jeremiah, if he speculated about the future in this way, would have pictured a monarchic State, though its "security" might well be consistent with the suzerainty of Babylon; it is not unlikely that he would have favoured and expected a single rather than a dual monarchy for Judah and Israel. In any event Jeremiah deserves the title of being "the least apocalyptic of the prophets." But the authenticity of the passage is most doubtful, and it seems most reasonable to suppose that Jeremiah, realizing wherein true religion consists, died with no light of dawn upon the horizon, but content to leave the issue to the living God.

But in coming to this conclusion we have omitted to consider one of the most important passages, if it be authentic, in respect of Jeremiah's outlook upon the future, namely the promise of the "new

[1] See Skinner, op. cit., p. 312, n.

[2] For Zechariah (Zech. iii. 8), though but some eighty years later, speaks from a different world, the post-exilic.

covenant" (xxxi. 31 ff.). Our judgment upon this passage turns in part upon the vexed question of Jeremiah's attitude to the reforms of king Josiah.

In Old Testament criticism in recent years one of the few fixed points has been the identification of the law-book found in the Temple in the reign of Josiah with Deuteronomy (or at least with the nucleus of Deuteronomy), which may in the course of time have been subjected to various expansions and recensions. This position has anew been challenged with much vigour by Hölscher.[1] It is not possible here to enter into a full discussion of this subject, but it is necessary to give some indication of the grounds upon which I am not able to accept Hölscher's reconstruction.

If Deuteronomy in the main is not the document upon which Josiah's reforms were based, when did it arise? Hölscher must offer some alternative. "Deuteronomy is," he tells us, "as its contents show, a law-book of the Levitical priesthood. Its circle of interests proves that it arose in Palestine—that is, in Jerusalem. Hence it must derive from those priestly circles which shortly afterwards belonged to the opponents of Nehemiah."[2] Such an astonishing conclusion of itself makes us suspect the theory. There is very much to be said for the view that Deuteronomy formed the basis of the reforms of Nehemiah.[3] If Deuteronomy were the

[1] *Die Geschichte der isr. u jüd. Religion*, pp. 130 ff. Giessen, 1922. *Komposition u Ursprung des Deuteronomiums, Zeitschrift f. alttest.* Wissenschaft, 1922, Heft 3/4, pp. 161 ff. *Das Buch der Könige* in the first volume of the *Gunkel Festschrift.*

[2] *Z.A.T.W.*, p. 251.

[3] See Browne, *Early Judaism*, pp. 176 ff. Many difficulties are removed on the assumption that Ezra comes two generations after Nehemiah—that is, in the reign of Artaxerxes II (see Neh. xii. 11, 22; Ezra x. 6; Neh. iii. 1; ib., p. 179). Moreover, Neh. viii,

programme of Jeremiah's opponents, we must entirely reconstruct all our ideas about the fifth century and pay little heed to such traditions or records as come down to us. Are Nehemiah's opponents likely to have fathered a "Utopian" code? Are they likely to have sponsored a code dealing with mixed marriages as does Deuteronomy? Such an hypothesis raises far more difficulties than it allays.

But why does Hölscher deny that Deuteronomy has anything to do with Josiah's reforms? Chiefly in virtue of the "ideological" or ideal and impracticable character of some of the Deuteronomic laws. Thus he notices the absurdity of supposing that the whole population of Judea—men, women and children, male and female slaves, Levites and strangers, estimated at 120,000 persons in the time of Josiah—should have left the fields and the cattle and spent a week engaged in sacrifices and worship in the Temple precincts for the Feast of Tabernacles! Again, how could the whole population go up to Jerusalem three times in the year? There is much force in these points. But the seemingly Utopian character of Deuteronomy seems correctly to be explained by Welch, who indicates that the code is a re-edition and amalgamation of earlier local codes; the idea of centralization was later imposed upon the code. The realization that Josiah was *de facto* king of central Palestine fortifies the conviction that Deuteronomy (apart from the centralization clause) was the basis of his reform.

Certain points in Deuteronomy Hölscher finds

apart from ver. 18b, fits Deuteronomy far better than P. Again, it is Deuteronomy, not P, that deals with the problem of mixed marriages—a burning problem in Nehemiah's day (cf. van Hoonacker's *Schweich Lectures*, pp. 16 f.).

definitely inconsistent with its pre-exilic origin. For instance, he regards it as " unthinkable " that prior to the exile the Palestinian coast should have been spoken of as part of the Jewish realm [1]; but why this is " unthinkable " in the days of Manasseh, but not unnatural just before Nehemiah, when the Jews had lost all political power, it is difficult to see! The kindly reference to Edom in Deut. ii. 4 must date, he thinks,[2] from the time when Judah's desire for hegemony over Edom had long since ceased. On the contrary, the furious bitterness of the Jews against Edom dates from the exile, and this passage is most naturally taken as a mark of pre-exilic authorship! Hölscher further suggests that vi. 15, with its reference to the anger of God destroying the people from off the face of the earth, implies the overthrow of Judah as a fact; but destruction in these general terms might be the threat of any true successor of Elijah.[3] Hans Schmidt, in his criticism of Hölscher,[4] points out that had the blessings and curses in Deuteronomy been exilic or post-exilic, there could not fail to be some reference to the exile. Moreover, are the laws in xx. 1 ff., dealing with war, likely to have been incorporated in a law-book shortly before the time of Nehemiah? Again then, we are free to ask, what attitude did the prophet Jeremiah adopt towards the reforms of Josiah? [5]

[1] *Z.A.T.W.*, p. 165. [2] Ib., p. 166. [3] Ib., p. 175.
[4] *Theologische Blätter*, September 1923, pp. 223 f.
[5] It has recently been maintained by Horst in *Z.A.T.W.*, 1923, pp. 94 ff., that Jeremiah did not come forward as a prophet in the year 626 B.C., but rather in the period immediately following Megiddo. It is not possible to discuss that question here, nor is it needful. On any showing Jeremiah lived through Josiah's reformation, and was later in close touch with the house of Shaphan and others who had been prime movers in the reformation; he

"Josiah's reform," says Skinner, "was the biggest effort that had ever been made to bring the life of Israel into conformity with the will of God." [1] As to the scope and limits of the original Deuteronomy there has been much discussion. That it contained chaps. xii. to xxvi., apart from minor glosses,[2] is substantially agreed. That chap. xxviii belonged also we must suppose in order to explain the king's consternation when it was read.[3] That in substance iv. 4 to xi belongs also it seems necessary to suppose when we remember that Josiah's reformation was clearly not merely a change of ceremonies, but a great religious movement.[4]

Before coming to more general considerations, it is necessary first to consider certain isolated passages in Jeremiah which might reasonably be taken to refer to Deuteronomy. The first of these is xi. 1–8, where, as some have thought, it is stated that Jeremiah engaged in a preaching tour in the villages in support of the reforms of Josiah. The passage is very difficult; it is in prose,[5] and Volz is probably right that vers. 6–8 are a duplicate version of the preceding. The whole passage is very much in the style of Deuteronomy, and it is easy to say that the whole incident has been invented by the Deuteronomic editor, who thought that Jeremiah must have taken some such line. At

must therefore have defined his attitude towards Deuteronomy. I understand that in the *Zeitschrift d. deutschen Morgenl. Gesellschaft N. F.*, 2 Bd., 1923, pp. 220 ff., Horst has argued that Josiah's reform was based, not on a Mosaic law-book, but on a prophetic writing. I have not seen this paper.

[1] Op. cit., p. 96.

[2] See Bertholet, *Kom.*

[3] See Bertholet, pp. xx f.

[4] See Gray, *Introduction*, and Driver, *I.C.C.*, pp. lxv ff.

[5] At least Erbt's metrical reconstruction seems to me very unconvincing (op. cit., pp. 139 f.).

the same time, the invention of an incident like this is not in the manner of the editor, and it is reasonable to think that we have reference here to some real incident in Jeremiah's ministry. But whether this can be a tour in support of Josiah's reforms is another matter. It is, indeed, a question whether the phrase "this covenant" can refer to Deuteronomy.[1] Volz takes the covenant to be the Sinai covenant, not Deuteronomy; he thinks the preaching incident is misplaced and that its occasion was probably Jehoiakim's attempt to overthrow the reformation of Josiah.[2] This passage by itself, then, is decisive. The same may be said of viii. 8. This might, indeed, refer to Deuteronomy as a forgery of the scribes, but the reference might equally well be to falsified copies of Deuteronomy [3] or to documents "like the heretical Gospels of early Christian times," the work of "formalist priests and lying prophets," [4] or to such cases as are condemned in Isa. x. 1 f.,[5] or, perhaps more probably, to later developments of Deuteronomy in the direction of ceremonial and cultus, "calamus and frankincense," at the expense of or in oblivion of the weightier and deeper matters of Deuteronomy, so that "that which was begun in the spirit was perfected in the flesh." [6] At any rate, it is not possible to adduce this passage to prove Jeremiah's original attitude to the reforms. No other passages, strange to say, have any *prima facie* reference to Deuteronomy except the new covenant prophecy in xxxi. 31 ff., the interpretation

[1] See Skinner, pp. 97 ff.
[2] Pp. 128 f. On *berith* as "foundation" rather than "covenant" see ib., pp. 130 f.
[3] Peake.
[4] Cheyne, *Jeremiah, His Life and Times*, p. 62.
[5] Volz.
[6] Skinner, p. 165.

and even authenticity of which, however, partly depends upon the present discussion. We turn, therefore, to more general considerations.

Buttenwieser thinks that Deut. xviii. 15–22 is definitely aimed at the literary prophets,[1] and that Jeremiah in his Temple sermon must be said to "stamp the nation's holiest beliefs as mockery and delusion."[2] Duhm is not less emphatic in his judgment that between Jeremiah and Deuteronomy there is an unbridgeable gulf. This view has in general very strong justification, the more so if Chaps. xii to xxvi be regarded as the very heart of Deuteronomy. There is no escape from Jeremiah vi. 20, vii. 22. It is here emphatically and explicitly stated that ceremony and sacrifice have nothing to do with the religion of Moses and the true worship of Israel. We couple these passages with the Temple sermon, with the repudiation of circumcision as effectual in itself, with the letter to the exiles, and undoubtedly we breathe a different air from Deut. xii to xxvi (cf. Jer. xi. 15, LXX).

But there are, I think, decisive reasons for rejecting the very natural view that Jeremiah's attitude to Deuteronomy was purely hostile. In the first place, it seems clear that the prophecies of Jeremiah were treasured and edited by those who certainly supposed that Jeremiah supported, not opposed, the Deuteronomic reformation. It may well be that the editor or editors misunderstood Jeremiah, but plainly no breath of tradition had come down to them to the effect that Jeremiah was the opponent of Josiah and his fellow-reformers. A more tangible proof we find in the enduring friendship between Jeremiah and the

[1] *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 29 ff. [2] Ib., p. 23.

house of Shaphan.[1] Shaphan, the chancellor, was closely connected with the finding of the law-book [2]; it was in the chamber of his son Gemariah that Jeremiah's roll was first read [3]; Ahikam, Shaphan's son, saved Jeremiah's life [4]; it was in Ahikam's son's house that Jeremiah was received when he was delivered from prison by the Chaldæans [5]; it was by another of Shaphan's house that Jeremiah sent his letter to the exiles.[6] In view of the friendship of Jeremiah with the house of Shaphan, and, indeed, in view of the friendly hearing given by the princes to the roll,[7] it is almost incredible that Jeremiah should have spoken of Deuteronomy as a work botched together by lying scribes, and we are bound to assume a real understanding between the prophet and at least the more spiritually minded of those behind the reformation movement.

But amongst those who reject Duhm's root-and-branch denial that Jeremiah can ever have looked favourably on Deuteronomy there is much divergence of opinion. Peake [8] thinks that the prophet, being no dreamy idealist, may well have thought that as a practical man he must give his support to that second best which at the moment seemed feasible. We may remark, however, that this tolerant accommodation to the second best is in general not a distinguishing mark of the great Hebrew prophets! Davidson [9] thinks that "Jeremiah may have sought to impress on men the general idea of Deuteronomy, that of the covenant

[1] *Pace* Buttenwieser, op. cit., p. 38, n.
[2] 2 Kings xxiii. 3; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 15.
[3] Jer. xxxvi. 10.
[4] xxvi. 24.
[5] xxxix. 14.
[6] xxix. 3.
[7] xxxvi. 16 ff.
[8] p. 13.
[9] *H.D.B.*, p. 570.

between Jehovah and Israel . . . but a formal championship of Deuteronomy would have been very unlike him." Skinner asserts scarcely less clearly than Duhm the "essential discordance between the spirit of law and the spirit of prophecy," [1] but thinks that in later years Jeremiah, having learnt by experience, came to change his mind; a woman, he thinks, must sometimes be engaged to a man before she can know that she can never marry him! [2] Amongst those who think that originally Jeremiah welcomed Deuteronomy there is a general conviction that in later years he changed his mind, probably because he saw how superficial the reformation had been.[3] But is justice here done either to the continued friendship of the house of Shaphan or to Jeremiah's religious instinct and insight? Every indication, moreover, is against a formal breach at any time between the prophet and the reforming party.

How deep, then, goes the alleged fundamental discrepancy between Deuteronomy and Jeremiah? Stade [4] rightly emphasizes the enormous difference that Deuteronomy made in the history and survival of Judah. He points out that, although as a matter of fact some of Israel's greatest prophets laboured after 621 B.C., yet from that date onwards Israel was the people of a book; the nation was no more to live by the word of God spoken through the prophets; the prophets rather were looked upon as the expounders and preachers of the book. Thus Deuteronomy really cuts away the ground from under prophecy, and there

[1] p. 103. [2] p. 106.
[3] Erbt, op. cit., p. 139; Gunkel, *Propheten*, p. 88.
[4] *Bibl. Theol.*, p. 267, following Wellhausen, *Isr. Gesch.*, pp. 158 f., 1894.

is a fundamental difference between Deuteronomy and Jeremiah. To this it may fairly be answered that we must distinguish between the intention of the authors of Deuteronomy and the result they actually accomplished. Deuteronomy does not contemplate the supersession of prophecy, but the raising up of a line of prophets (Deut. xviii. 20), and the test of the prophet's inspiration is not conformity with Deuteronomy.[1] Moreover, though it is true that the Jews became in the end the people of a book, that was certainly and demonstrably not the case during the lifetime of the prophet Jeremiah.

The elucidation of this problem is of real significance in regard to modern ecclesiastical and religious differences. It is certain, then, that the sacrificial practices of Israel had originally been designed to effect some sort of communion or rapport between God and man; it is not less certain that this whole conception of religion was repudiated by Jeremiah; between those two religions there is scarcely a common term. But it is extremely hazardous to guess at the theology or theory of sacrifice, if any, which obtained in seventh-century Israel amongst the more spiritually minded. In that world for the purposes of public worship sacrifice was assumed without question. But the agreement or disagreement between Jeremiah and the Deuteronomic reformers turns very largely upon the sacramental theory which the reformers espoused. A modern illustration may be allowed: Within Christendom at the present day there may be distinguished at least these four types of thought in regard to sacraments—first, the total, or at least intended, repudiation of all

[1] Ver. 22.

external forms; second, the belief in the efficacy of sacraments *ex opere operato*; third, the acceptance of sacraments as declaratory and expressive of the Christian life, but not as creative of it; fourth, if this may be described as a type of thought, an assurance based upon experience of blessing that the sacraments are as a matter of fact a means of grace and to be accepted as such even in the absence of any kind of theory about them. It is plain that there is a difference, rightly called fundamental, between the Christian Quaker on the one hand, and on the other the Catholic, who believes in the automatic or *ex opere operato* efficacy of sacraments, such as infant baptism; but between the Quaker and the Christian who regards the baptism of infants as the expression and declaration of the truth that "we love Him because He first loved us," there would appear to be no ultimate difference or disagreement. Thus in the present case our real problem is to determine, if it be possible, how the cultus was regarded by such men as Hilkiah and Shaphan. Here we are somewhat at a stand, because the Pentateuch assumes sacrifice and never gives a theory of it, but we have, I think, been seriously misled by those who have given themselves to the comparative study of religions; for the most part they have been concerned with origins, and it has not been strictly within their province to determine the particular notions of a sacrifice in the various stages of the religion of Israel for which in the other religions there is no complete parallel. It may well be beyond question that rites and prescriptions in Deut. xii to xxvi derive ultimately from beliefs in primitive *tabus* and the magical efficacy of sacraments, and it has too readily been assumed by commentators

and those who have sought to assess Jeremiah's attitude to Deuteronomy that we might argue from practices to theories in the seventh century. But I take it as quite certain that the more spiritual in Israel, though they might still cling to ancient usages, exercised them with almost as little reference to primitive ideas as the English householder, adjusting the holly before Christmas, has thought of the cruel rites of his Druid forbears. A few instances must suffice.

There can be little doubt that the offering of first-fruits derives from the idea of a removal of *tabu*; only when the first-fruits were "consecrated" was the rest of the crop safe food for man. This belongs to a religion of fear. But it is to be noted that the general "feel" of such agricultural festivals in Israel was one of hilarity and of thanksgiving to God. The *tabu* fear is originally independent of a belief in any personal or quasi-personal divine being. When the belief in the divine being arises, the offering of the first-fruits is made a thank-offering to him, but the forms of the ceremony and the strictly "superstitious" or residual fear that it will be dangerous to eat of the fruits till the offering has been made are traces of the more primitive ancestry of the custom. Ideas of *mana* and *tabu* still cling round the sacraments in the thoughts of many Christians, and indeed it might be argued that very many parts of the office of the Mass derive from very primitive elements in religion, but it is hazardous to argue too exactly from the Mass-book to the thought of the more spiritually minded Christians in any generation. So in Israel.

Again, it is reasonably certain that some of the rites in Israel had originally nothing to do with the religion

of Moses and the God of Sinai, such, for instance, as the prohibition of the sowing of a field with varied seeds [1] or the ritual to be solemnized in the case of a murder by a person unknown.[2] They were taken up into the Yahweh-cult, but of necessity they must have undergone a change of idea, if not of usage, in the process. Indeed, we can see within Deuteronomy itself, particularly in the so-called humanitarian motive of legislation, this very process at work. It should further be noted that, with or without historical justification, the Passover is made a memorial rite, being connected with the Exodus from Egypt [3]; the Feasts of Weeks and Tabernacles [4] are interpreted as occasions for thank-offerings. I am not willing to assert that there lingered none of the old association of the automatically effective sacrament about these rites, but so far as the evidence goes it seems to be eliminated. We need not doubt that the prophets, including Jeremiah, were accurate when they stigmatized the *popular* religion of the people, even of the priests and prophets, as sheer heathenism,[5] but Deuteronomy is not a popular document; it is reasonably taken to be along the lines of the reformation of Hezekiah, and therefore to be more or less under the inspiration of Isaiah. In the context in which they occur it should be plain that the whole motive for the ritual regulations of Deuteronomy is gratitude and remembrance; the sacraments are fundamentally declaratory. Deuteronomy was accepted by the spiritually minded few; it was never inwardly

[1] Deut. xxii. 9.
[2] Deut. xxi. 1–9. See Elhorst, *Z.A.T.W.*, 1921; Heft 1/2, pp. 58 ff.
[3] Deut. xvi. 1 ff.
[4] Deut. xvi. 9 ff.
[5] Cf. Jer. xliv. 15–19.

accepted nor understood by the many. This at last enables us to understand how it was that Jeremiah regarded the popular worship as heathen and himself repudiated the cultus root and branch, while he undoubtedly lived and worked in understanding and amity with the spiritually minded among the reformers, and was even taken by later generations to have been a sponsor and protagonist of Deuteronomy.

We turn to the new covenant passage in xxxi. 31 ff. As we have it, this is in prose; but I feel no real doubt that the original passage is verse in 3 : 3 metre, as is involved in the following translation:

Behold the days are coming
That I will strike a new covenant,
Not according to the covenant which I struck with their fathers
In the day when I took them by the hand
To bring them out of the land of Egypt,
Which My covenant they brake.
For this is the covenant that I will strike
After those days:
I will put my instruction within them,
And upon their heart will I write it.
And I will be God to them,
And they shall be a people to Me.
For they shall all know Me,
From the least to the greatest.

Did Jeremiah write this, and, if so, what did he mean? Against the authenticity of the passage two points might be raised, neither of which is decisive. In the first place, the opening phrase, as must be admitted, is suspicious, for the words, "Behold the days are coming," usually herald a late oracle; in the second, the outlook is more cheerful than we should expect from

Jeremiah. If Duhm is right in interpreting the passage as meaning that what is promised is a new covenant to enable men to walk by the old *torah*, it could not be written by Jeremiah. But while the passage might be so taken, commentators generally suppose that a contrast is made between the new dispensation and the new covenant on the one hand, and the old dispensation and the covenant of Deuteronomy on the other. The passage would thus be a comment on the inadequacy of Deuteronomy for the purposes of spiritual religion. But, quite apart from Jeremiah's authorship, it remains a question whether Deuteronomy is here in question. In Deut. iv there is reference to a covenant at Horeb, which might conceivably be regarded as given in the day of the deliverance from Egypt ; but the contents of Deuteronomy are not for the most part claimed as part of that covenant. The setting of Deuteronomy as a whole is "on the hither side Jordan, in the valley over against Bethpeor, in the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon." The decalogue might indeed be regarded as the Horeb covenant, but the idea of a covenant at Horeb was not invented by Deuteronomy ; it is integral to J.[1] Moreover, if Jeremiah referred to Deuteronomy as a whole in these terms as the basis of the national life, he could not have sat so loose to it as was undoubtedly the case ; moreover, it is, I fancy, going beyond the probabilities of the case to assume that Shaphan and Hilkiah, not to mention Jeremiah, took Deuteronomy to be an historical document literally narrating the speeches of Moses. We conclude, then, that the passage is not naturally or necessarily to be taken of Deuteronomy

[1] Exod. xxxiv. 10a, 28 ; xxiv. 8.

as a whole, but that if we regard it as contrasting a law written on stone with a law written in the heart with a power to obey it, it is along the lines of Jeremiah's thought, but at the same time it is doubtful whether he is to be regarded as its author.

Thus we conclude that Jeremiah predicted no return from exile, that there is no phantasy-eschatology in his outlook, and that like the other great prophets he stands for a religion free, ethical and personal.

CHAPTER VII

EZEKIEL

When we turn to Ezekiel, the problems of the preceding chapters seem by comparison to be easy of solution. We have to deal with two allied but separate sets of questions, textual and theological, and for the present we seem far from the possibility of any attempts at finality. We are in the first place beset by dilemmas. Ezekiel, not without some show of reason, has been regarded as the father of Judaism; he has been hailed as a priest no less than a prophet, and in his insistence upon ceremonial details he is generally regarded as standing upon a lower level of inspiration than his predecessors. Buttenwieser expresses the usual modern view in an extreme form when he says that "his place is not among the great prophets."[1] On the other hand, it has been one of the commonplaces of exegesis that Ezekiel was the pupil and disciple of Jeremiah. "To Jeremiah's influence," says Davidson, "every page of his prophecies bears witness."[2] To add to our confusion we are often told that Ezekiel was the first systematic theologian. "Apart from quite transient impulses of regret or horror," says Lofthouse, "his thoughts exhibit a

[1] Op. cit., p. xxi.

[2] *Com. Cambridge Bible for Schools*, ed. Streane, p. xix; cf. pp. xlvi ff.

careful and even exaggerated consistency." [1] The father of Judaism, the disciple of Jeremiah, a logically consistent thinker—could confusion be worse confounded? Moreover, apart from the question of his relationship to Jeremiah on the one hand, and to Judaism on the other, Ezekiel is a problem in himself. 'He was," says Lofthouse, "a stern and even harsh Puritan, yet a devotee of ritual and an ardent High-churchman; a logician and a poet; a statesman and a dreamer of dreams; a master of simple and direct style, and a visionary whose thoughts continually break through language and escape.'" [2] It would scarcely be unnatural if from these judgments we should conclude, either that Ezekiel has been greatly misunderstood, or that he was a case of psychological dissociation, if not of dual personality. Recent discussions of the text lend colour to the view that 'in the whole literature of the world there is scarcely a book that has been so maltreated as has been Ezekiel by the scribes," [3] and the following discussions are of necessity most tentative. We have considered the psychology of Ezekiel; we turn now to his attitude to the cultus and his "eschatology" or outlook upon the future.

(1) On *a priori* grounds we might easily solve our difficulties in regard to the cultus by the simple expedient of denying the authenticity of Chap. xl to the end; there is at least a *prima facie* inconsistency between these and the earlier chapters. If we find that this inconsistency is fundamental, we must either deny the authenticity of the section or the

[1] *The Prophet of Reconstruction*, p. 65. J. Clarke.
[2] Ib., p. 67.
[3] Jahn, *Das Buch Ezechiel*, p. iii. Leipzig, 1905.

logical consistency of the prophet. Did he perhaps become "more priestly in thought the more he pondered on idolatry"?[1] It will be well first of all to consider Ezekiel's position as we should understand it if the last section of the prophecy were lost.

We may first note that Ezekiel predicts a restoration of Israel. The motive for this is remarkable; it is not, or it is not primarily, Adonai's love for His people; it is rather "for the sake of My name, that it might not be profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them forth."[2] This is fundamental to Ezekiel's whole outlook. In the view of Ezekiel, the whole history of Israel had been one long apostasy, a series of relapses into idolatry; above all, it had been a moral repudiation of Adonai.[3] Israel was ripe for destruction, and Israel must be destroyed; but if Israel is destroyed, what will the heathen say? They will assuredly say that Adonai is powerless, that He is no God, much less God of the whole earth. But like Isaiah and the other prophets Ezekiel has "seen the Lord," has known Him as God of righteousness and truth and justice, has received the unshakeable conviction that His glory shall one day fill the earth. The sin and apostasy of Israel cannot prevent this nor thwart in the end the purposes of God. But only through a community could Adonai be revealed to the world in His righteousness and true glory; yet to none but Israel had He revealed His name and nature; therefore, though Israel as a nation be destroyed, there must arise a new Israel to vindicate the glory and righteousness of Adonai in the earth. Therefore

[1] Lofthouse, ib., pp. 119 f.
[2] Chap. xx. 22, etc.
[3] Chap. xxiii, etc.

out of such scattered remnants as might remain over Adonai must raise up for Himself by His own almighty act a new people; He must put a new spirit within them; this He must do for His own name's sake, because He is real and omnipotent, and such is His nature and purpose. This undoubtedly is the ground-plan of Ezekiel's theology, and it is in many ways a remarkable forecast of the later theology of Calvin. If Ezekiel was concerned with the cultus, his interest in it was only subsidiary to this great scheme; he was primarily a prophet, even if secondarily we find him to have been a priest. But apart from Chaps. xl to xlviii, should we ever have supposed him to have priestly interests at all?

Adonai is God of the whole earth, and the whole earth must be brought to the knowledge of His glory, but this is plainly not visualized as an acceptance by the whole world of the Jewish law and Jewish cultus; it is rather as a God of righteousness that Adonai will be revealed before the nations,[1] and it is for their moral offences that the nations are to be punished[2]; Sodom is to share in the great salvation.[3] So far the voice of Ezekiel is identical with that of the great prophets who preceded him.

[1] Chaps. iii. 10–21, xviii, xxii f. [2] Chaps. xxv to xxxii.

[3] Chap. xvi. 53. Toy, who greatly disparages the ethical element in Ezekiel, remarks (*ad* xxv. 7) that the judgment pronounced by Ezekiel against Ammon proves that "the prophet's attitude is not ethical, but national," for "the two peoples were morally on a par" (p. 145; cf. p. 147, *Polychrome Bible Com.*). But the matter is not so clear as this. If we assume the authenticity of the passage, which is doubted by Hölscher (op. cit., pp. 418 f.), Ezekiel may have thought that Ammon ought to have known that the God of Israel was not like the gods of the nations. Can we suppose that the teaching of Amos or Isaiah was confined to the borders of Israel alone? Or Ezekiel may mean that Ammon, as Israel, will have to learn through suffering and destruction that there is a moral order in the universe.

But we do not find in the first two main sections of the book of Ezekiel any explicit repudiation of the whole cultus such as we have found in Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah. On the contrary, we find in a few passages where Ezekiel seems to contend for what we should call the correct cultus; thus in xxxiii. 25, and possibly, if the text be so amended, in xviii. 6,[1] Ezekiel protests against eating flesh with the blood; in xx. 12, xxii. 8, xxiii. 38, he is concerned with Sabbath observance. In xx. 40—a doubtful passage—there is reference to offerings and first-fruits; in xxii. 26 the complaint is made that the priests make no distinction between clean and unclean, sacred and profane, while perhaps xx. 25 f. might be cited to imply that apart from particular statutes the traditional code as a whole had divine sanction. It is not easy to appraise the importance of these passages; in most if not all of these cases it is almost impossible to attain to any certainty as to the text, and there is good reason to think that Ezekiel has been edited from the point of view of the priestly code.[2] The reference to the distinction between clean and unclean, sacred and profane, seems to be a gloss introduced from xliv. 23, which is not from Ezekiel's hand. Thus Ezekiel protests against the violation of the Sabbath and the eating of meat with the blood. What does this prove? If we add to them Chaps. xl to xlviii, they might be taken to show that Ezekiel was considerably exercised about the correct Yahwistic cultus; but for the moment we are leaving out of account these later chapters. We are therefore struck with the extraordinarily small place which the cultus occupies in Ezekiel's thought in the first two sections

[1] So Toy

[2] See Jahn, op. cit., pp. vi f., ix.

of the book; for the most part these almost passing references occur in the midst of longer passages, where the whole stress is upon the ethical, in the style of an Amos. When we look at these passages more closely we observe that the observation of the Sabbath is a duty that goes back to the Mosaic period, while the objection to eating meat with the blood, while doubtless derived ultimately from *tabu* ideas, had presumably become by association an action viewed with physical and even moral repulsion; it would make a Jew almost physically sick to see such a thing done; it was the sort of thing which no one with any nice feeling could do; it was a mark of utter insensibility to all the finer feelings; it was as disgusting as eating live animals would be to us.

On the whole the natural conclusion to draw from these passages, taken in their wide context of moral denunciation, is that Ezekiel, while standing fundamentally in the prophetic succession, had possibly more close sympathy than Jeremiah with the point of view of the spiritually minded sponsors of the Deuteronomic reformation.[1] At any rate, in these chapters of Ezekiel, up to the concluding vision, we find no stress upon ceremonial; we find, rather, the prophetic religion, with its universal outlook and its ethical requirements and its hatred of idolatry.

We turn, then, to consider Chaps. xl to xlviii. Of this section of the book Duhm says that it "has nothing to do with the prophetic religion; we find ourselves in the atmosphere of Judaism and of the Talmud."[2] If it be really true that in this section we breath the atmosphere of Judaism and the Talmud, the section has as little connection with the earlier

[1] See supra, pp. 200 ff. [2] *Theol. d. Proph.*, p. 263.

chapters of Ezekiel as with the prophetic religion in general, and we should be bound to say that the first two sections of the book entirely misrepresent the prophet's real outlook, or that we have to do with two different Ezekiels in the same person, or that the last chapters were not written by Ezekiel at all. The first of these positions must be definitely ruled out; the inaugural vision, the prophetic denunciations, the longer and shorter passages cannot sensibly be interpreted as the work of one who breathed the air of the Talmud; for the other two it matters little for exegesis whether we are dealing with two distinct persons or with a case of dual personality. *A priori* arguments as to what a prophet could or could not have written must be used with great caution; but Chaps. i to xxxix afford us a remarkably clear picture of the general religious position of the prophet; and if Chaps. xl to xlviii are definitely inconsistent with it, we should be entirely justified in regarding these last chapters as a separate treatise with no logical connection with the others. The real question is whether these last chapters are strictly out of harmony with the earlier chapters and the prophetic religion in general. The problem again is complicated by the increasing measure of agreement that the authorship of these last chapters, as we have them, is composite, the original draft being worked over by other hands.[1]

It has been maintained that all these regulations and plans for the future are based upon and presuppose the restoration to Palestine; this involves that God has raised up a new Israel, that the great change has come, that idolatry has been put away and the moral

[1] See G. A. Cooke in *Z.A.T.W.*, pp. 105 ff.; Heft 1/2, 1924.

aw is being obeyed from the heart. All that remains, herefore, is to sketch the manner of life and worship of the ransomed, restored, purified people. There is no reference in these chapters to the moral law, so t is argued, because moral obedience is presupposed and assumed throughout. Thus Davidson says: ' The sacrifices and ministrations are not performed n order to obtain redemption, but at the most to conserve it. They have two aspects: first, they are vorship, service of Jehovah; and secondly, they have a prophylactic, conservative purpose, to secure that he condition of salvation be in no way forfeited. The salvation and blessedness of the people consists n the presence of Jehovah in His Temple, among men. His people, though all righteous and led by His pirit, are not free from the infirmities and inadvertencies incidental to human nature." [1] Similarly Lofthouse says of the sacraments and ceremonies in Ezekiel's teaching that " to regard them as ends in themselves opened the door to corruption. But as preservatives of the true purity of attitude to Jahveh, and as means of communion with Him, unbroken and confident, they were essential." [2] But do these contentions really bring Ezekiel's last chapters into line with his first or with the teaching of the earlier prophets? Sacrifices and ceremonies " to conserve redemption," " to secure that the condition of salvation be in no way forfeited," " essential " as means of communion with Adonai—we ask in astonishment, what in the prophetic teaching is the condition of salvation but repentance, and what is essential for communion with Him but faith? The efficacy of

[1] Op. cit., p. 315.
[2] *The Prophet of Reconstruction*, p. 63.

sacraments presupposed in these quotations and in some of these chapters has in truth nothing to do with the prophetic religion; it is rather heathen or Canaanitish. If Davidson and Lofthouse were correct we should have to agree that Ezekiel is not one of the great prophets. We may, however, more hopefully approach the problem from the consideration of individual sections.

The whole of Chaps. xl to xlviii have often been regarded, as it would appear the editor of the book wishes us to regard them, as one long vision. But a closer analysis of the texts clearly indicates the composite character of this part of the book. In Chaps. xl to xlii we find in vision form the description of a temple: "a man" shows the prophet round the temple, measuring its various parts; in xliii. 1–9 the prophet sees the glory of Adonai enter the temple and fill it. There seem indications that this is a genuine vision in the same sense as the inaugural vision or the vision of the destruction of the temple and city earlier in the book. If this were, as has sometimes been supposed, a conscious programme put into the form of a vision for the sake of literary and artistic effect, and that, too, by a systematic theologian, we should have inevitably expected some reference to the restoration of the people to their home-land and the building of the temple. The temple is not described as being built, nor does it "rise before the prophet's eyes" bit by bit. He first sees it as a whole (xl. 2), and later inspects more closely its various parts. Again, there is a certain dream-like inconsistency. The temple which the prophet sees is in use; in the inner court he sees the place "where they washed" (not were to wash) "the

burnt offering" (xl. 38), and the tables on which "they slew" (not were to slay) "the sacrifices" (xl. 41). This use of tenses, by the way, is in marked contrast to later sections in these chapters; but although the temple is apparently in use, it is not yet consecrated by the presence of Adonai. Who have built this temple? It is not Solomon's. Who are using it? The redeemed, ransomed people, to whom the new heart and new spirit have been given? There is no indication of that in the text. We are involved in great difficulties in these chapters if we refuse to consider them as a dream or vision, as they purport to be; this is a temple seen in vision, not, or at least not primarily, a sketch for a temple to be one day built. The two verses which by the use of the future tense contradict this view and seem to show that the "vision" is a conscious programme are xlii. 13 and 14; but ver. 14 is clearly a gloss inserted here from xliv. 19, and ver. 13 seems to go with it, and in any case this little explanation by the prophet's guide is not in the style of these three chapters. It seems, therefore, reasonable to regard both these verses as insertions.

That a restoration of a redeemed and purified people who have built this temple is not presupposed is proved by xliii. 9. The word comes to the prophet that if the people will remove their whoredom—that is, their idols or idolatrous symbols—from the temple and the corpses of their kings, then Adonai will dwell in the midst of His people for ever. This must refer to a temple that is standing; sensibly it could only refer to Solomon's temple which had been so polluted, not to the temple just described; but such an inconsistency is psychologically natural in a dream-vision.

Ezekiel sees in a vision a temple that is like Solomon's temple and yet different; it is a temple already standing and in use, but it is not yet consecrated by Adonai's presence. But xliii. 9 inconsistently makes the dwelling of Adonai with His people dependent upon reforms inapplicable to the temple above described. It is, of course, possible that vers. 7b to 9 are a gloss.

When we pass to xliii. 13–27, the description and consecration of the altar, we are confronted not with vision, but with a programme. This we see most clearly in xliii. 18, for it is plain that the temple, or at least the altar, is not yet built! Moreover, the tenses imply that instructions are here being given for the future. Again, we note that the instructions in vers. 13 ff. are not given through "the man"; in ver. 18 "he" obviously refers to "the man," but grammatically the last speaker is Adonai. Further, xliii. 27 is not really consistent with xliii. 9, for Adonai cannot dwell with His people on certain terms and accept them on quite different terms. Chap. xliii. 13–27, then, is not part of Ezekiel's vision, and it seems to offer indications of being an addition by someone who took the vision to be a programme for a post-exilic temple.

Chap. xliv contains regulations for the priests and Levites. Does it belong to the vision? Vers. 1–5 look somewhat like a pale duplicate of xliii. 1–9, but they are cast in the form of what shall be; they are concerned with a programme. Vers. 6–31, though they might be regarded as given through "the man," are not in line with Chaps. xl to xliii. where "the man" is guide but not source of prophetic sermons.[1] Chap. xliv. 10 clearly refers to the priests

[1] It may be observed that here also Israel is not regarded as purified and redeemed, but as rebellious.

of the high places outside Jerusalem; the worship of the high places is described as idolatry. Similarly, in ver. 15, the reference is plainly to the old-established Jerusalem priesthood; but the section implies a favourable judgment upon the Jerusalem priesthood and the Jerusalem cultus which is totally inconsistent with the position of the prophet Ezekiel in his earlier and authentic oracles.[1]

Chap. xlv. 9–12, again, has nothing to do with Ezekiel's vision, and it is not very easy to fit it into the background of the exile at all. Vers. 13–17 belong to a programme, not a vision. The "ye" of ver. 13 is presumably the priests; grammatically, in its context it should be the princes.

Again, vers. 18–25 are a programme for the future; they have nothing to do with the vision. It is hard to resist the conclusion that in these sections we have first drafts and adumbrations of the priestly code[2] that have been attached to Ezekiel's vision, which was taken (quite incorrectly, as I hope to show) for a programme and sketch of the future temple.

The same may be said of xlvi. 1–15, 16–18. Whom, we wonder, could *Ezekiel* have meant by "the people of the land" in vers. 3 and 9? What is their relation to "my people" in ver. 18?

Chap. xlvi. 19–24 is once more in the form of vision and for the most part of description, but here also the explanatory vers. 20 and 24 refer to the future. We might, however, see here a detached fragment of Ezekiel worked over by the editor.

In xlvii. 1–12 we come to authentic vision again,

[1] Cf. the vision of the destruction of the temple, the parable Aholah and Aholibah, etc.
[2] Cf. Cooke, *Z.A.T.W.*, ib., p. 111.

followed by the concluding sections, an appendix, which have clearly nothing to do with the vision.

There would seem, then, good reason to suppose that Ezekiel's closing *vision* consists roughly of xl. to xliii. 9 with xlvii. 1–12. We have now to ask whether this vision, taken by itself, would imply a programme for the future, and whether it is consistent with the rest of the teaching of Ezekiel and the prophetic religion in general.

We shall not here be concerned with the vision of Chap. xlvii because that will come before us in connection with the prophet's eschatology at a later stage. The first part of the vision is chiefly a description of a temple ; by those who added to it in the chapters following, as by Ezekiel's later commentators in general, this vision is taken to be also a prophecy or prospectus of the temple that was to rise after the exile. If Toy were right, that the vision is here "a literary device," [1] we should be bound to agree with the commentators and editors ; but if, as is vastly more probable, we have to do with a genuine vision, then we are almost bound to say that the commentators cannot be right. This is a question of psychology. In recent years the meaning of dreams and visions has been scientifically investigated. Only on certain fundamental points is there yet agreement but this much may be said to be relatively certain that the meaning of a dream or vision is endopsychic—that is to say, it concerns the dreamer's own personal problems ; second, that dream language is symbolical and that the meaning of the dream or vision can only be found through the mental and emotional associations of the various component parts ; moreover, we must

[1] *Polychrome Bible Com.*, p. 177.

arn to distinguish between the manifest and the
tent content of the dream. Ezekiel in exile, far
om home, may long for the old days when as a lad
e served in the temple which he loved and in which
e realized Adonai's presence. In his dream he
es the temple, the same, yet different, and he sees
ie glory of Adonai return to it. That, we may say,
the manifest dream-content; it is a simple wish-
lfilment; it is not a prophecy, still less a programme.
o discover the latent dream-content is more difficult,
erhaps impossible. We may be certain that Ezekiel
id not "analyse" his dreams, and we can do little
ore than speculate. The temple in his vision must
y all psychological principles be a symbol for some-
ing else. As we saw above,[1] we cannot argue to
saiah's conscious and adult attitude to the cultus of
is day from the fact that in his inaugural vision
ie fire from the altar is applied to his lips; in pre-
sely the same way, though apparently on a larger
ale, we cannot argue from the vision of the temple
Ezekiel's attitude to the cultus nor to the outward
mple which he had seen or hoped that one day
e would see. In dreams a house is very often a
mbol for a personality; it is reasonable, though
ecessarily hazardous, to suggest that here the
leal temple stands for the ideal religious Israel.
the second scene he sees the glory of Adonai, which
e himself had glimpsed, filling all Israel; and in the
ird scene he sees streams of healing for the world
suing from this perfected and glorified Israel. This
terpretation, though very uncertain, is at least
ong scientific lines; all interpretations of a vision
hich make it a literal programme of the future are

[1] See supra, p. 143.

essentially unscientific and must be abandoned. I is fair to suggest that Ezekiel has been the mos misunderstood of all the prophets. *His final visio has nothing directly to do with ritual or ceremonial no any temple of the future.*

(2) The "eschatology" of Ezekiel consists in hi theory of the vindication of the majesty and sovereignt of Adonai. We may first consider what he has to sa of the redemption of Israel. Of fundamental import ance here is the passage xxxvi. 22–9, of whic Davidson says that "it has no parallel in the Ol Testament, and reads like a fragment of a Paulin epistle.[1] This passage, which follows upon a denun ciation of Israel for their sins, indicates that for th sanctification of His name Adonai will restore Israe will cleanse them, regenerate them, fill them with th spirit, that so they may walk in the laws of God. Th word "forgiveness" is not used, but that a redeeme holy people, enjoying the presence and favour of Adona and the fruits of His blessing, must necessarily be forgiven people is obvious. But the absence of th term "forgiveness" may perhaps indicate a lacun in the argument. If Ezekiel had visualized th repentance of the people in sorrow and contrition, i would have been easy for him to speak of forgive ness. But two things he saw clearly: first, that th people as a whole was apostate; and second, tha Adonai must raise up for Himself out of Israel, whic alone knew His name, a new people. This must mea that they have new hearts and a new spirit. Th facts—the present impenitence, the coming regenera tion—are placed side by side, but brought into n clear relation. Ezekiel does not show, cannot show

[1] p. lx.

how the apostate heart is to be changed; he has no theory of how the atonement is to be effected; he can only say it will be so by the supernatural act of God.

In some degree, perhaps, the gulf is bridged by a suggestion in xx. 33–8—a passage which Hölscher, indeed, regards as secondary.[1] In certain respects the verses remind us of Hosea, for it is represented that Adonai will plead with His people by trouble and sorrow until they are constrained back into their allegiance. If the section is authentic, Ezekiel would seem to have thought that the whole nation was to be led forth into the wilderness between Babylon and Syria, and there the rebellious are to be purged out. Thus the whole nation is rebellious, but the experiences of the wilderness will change the hearts of some. This is perhaps in formal but not essential contradiction of Ezekiel's thought and experience of a remnant that even in exile was faithful, and out of which, by the act of God, the new nation must be born. It is plain that Ezekiel appealed to those in exile to turn away from iniquity and to "make themselves a new spirit,"[2] and that he knew himself called to be a watchman or shepherd of souls,[3] gathering a faithful nucleus in the land of exile. Moreover, he was not altogether unsuccessful; there was a faithful nucleus, who should save their souls alive in the coming judgment.[4] Like Baxter after him, Ezekiel preached with a great urgency to "dying men"; the judgments of God were abroad, and only such as repented should see the coming kingdom. The broad

[1] *Profeten*, pp. 415 f.
[2] Chap. xxxiii. 10–20; xviii. 20–32, esp. 31.
[3] Chap. iii. 16–21. [4] Chap. xiv. 3.

outlines of the future were clear to Ezekiel ; its details were obscure. But this very uncertainty as to details is itself significant. The true prophet is not one who claims to know all the mysteries of the future ; the eschatologist with a concise and detailed picture of the last days is no prophet.

Ezekiel's hopes and expectations of the future are symbolically set forth in the vision of the dry bones in Chap. xxxvii. In view of the use of the term "spirit" in xxxvi. 24 ff. and elsewhere it is worse than gratuitous, with Toy, to take the vision to refer to political resuscitation only. It may well be that the hope which underlies the vision came to the prophet through the contemplation of his "little flock" of faithful people.

Second, we turn to Ezekiel's doctrine of the Day of Adonai against the nations. The popular preachers of Amos's time had predicted a Day of Adonai against all the enemies of Israel, a Day of light and victory for Israel. *Prima facie* Ezekiel's doctrine of the Day conforms to the popular view which Amos repudiated. It is to be a day of woe and destruction for the enemies of Israel ; the Day of Adonai is that day when Egypt and the neighbouring nations shall know His judgments.[1] But these judgments are not due to any necessity of victory for the people of Adonai ; they are part of that Day which in Isaiah's phrase is against "all that is high and lifted up." This decisively marks off Ezekiel's doctrine from that popular phantasy which Amos rejected. In Ezekiel's thought the Day had already dawned in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Judean captivity.[2] Adonai's judgment upon Egypt and the other nations is but

[1] Chap. xxx. 3. [2] Chap. xiii. 5.

further vindication of that ethical principle in virtue of which judgment has first of all begun "from the house of God."

What apocalyptic elements, if any, can we detect in Ezekiel's thought of "the Day"? How far is the Day thought of as taking place in what we should call the natural order, and how far was it supposed to involve a supernatural cataclysm? Nowadays it is often assumed and thought that the Day is in Ezekiel, as in earlier prophets, part of the general apocalyptic eschatological thought of the time, that it involves therefore immediate interpositions of God and interferences with the world order as we ordinarily experience it.[1]

Davidson, with reference to the prediction of the elevation of Mount Zion above the mountains, of the physical change in the perlustrations of Jerusalem, and of the river issuing from the Temple, remarks that we have no right to conclude that these elements are "mere figures or symbols . . . and that the restoration described by Ezekiel is no more than that restoration which might be called natural, and which took place under Zerubbabel later.[2] So also G. A. Cooke says of Ezekiel that "his idea of the physical transformation of Nature became a regular element in apocalypse. . . . Evidently he meant it . . . to be taken quite literally."[3] Cooke also compares

[1] It may again be pointed out for the sake of precision that a distinction between a natural and a supernatural order would have been meaningless to the Hebrew prophets, but it is of service to us in our attempt to ascertain how far under the thought-forms of their day the prophets regarded what we call the natural order as a moral order and how far they despaired of this world and phantasied a future more in accordance with their own ideas of the world as it should be.

[2] Pp. 313 f.

[3] *Z.A.T.W.*, ib., p. 133.

xxxiv. 25–9; xxxvi. 8–15, 30–6. In xlvii. 1–12 we are told of the healing stream that flows from the Temple to the Dead Sea. The prophet does not explain how the river is to cross the steep limestone range east of Jerusalem; yet he was very familiar with the topography of Jerusalem, and if he thought of the face of the country as having been transformed, it would seem natural to suppose that he would have referred to this less incidentally. This kind of impossibility noted without surprise or comment is just the sort of thing with which we are familiar in dreams; and we seem justified in taking this story as being the transcript of a dream or vision, as indeed it is alleged to be. In this case it is entirely unscientific to take the symbols of the dream as if they were the realities of the waking thought. The stream of blessing that flows out from Jerusalem and fertilizes even the country of the Dead Sea is a symbol, simple and beautiful, of spiritual realities. But did, perhaps, Ezekiel take his dream or vision as a literal prevision of future events? It might have been so, and if we find in Ezekiel other instances of an expectation of the physical transformation of Nature, we could believe that it was so; but remembering that Ezekiel was a poet, and that the Oriental mind turns as naturally to images as Occidental to concrete prose description, we see that there is *a priori* no such probability.

As for xxxiv. 25–9 and xxxvi. 8–15, 30–6, they prove nothing to the point. Israel shall one day dwell again in Canaan; they shall then dwell in peace and prosperity; they shall not be liable to famine; the land shall no more be a desolation, but "like the garden of Eden," or, to use a more familiar expression, it should flow with milk and honey. There is nothing

here that involves or implies a supernatural fertility or vastly heightened productivity of the country. The Syrian wars, as we know, had seriously affected the prosperity of the northern farmers, and the wealth in Samaria was the obverse of the general distress. Then Samaria had suffered the long siege which must have been only less disastrous to the country round about than to the city itself; the tradition of the new settlers being in straits because of lions [1] illustrates the condition of the countryside. Then there is some reason to believe that at a later time the Scythian hordes came sweeping through the country, laying all waste almost to the gates of Jerusalem. Judea had suffered at least two invasions, which must have involved widespread suffering in the country districts, quite apart from the captivities of those in the city. In fact, during the whole of Ezekiel's lifetime, and for years before it, that country which was to have been the "land flowing with milk and honey" had been so placed that it had never for long been free from the fear of invasion; there was no security for the crops, and agriculture was a hazardous livelihood; some of the land had fallen right out of cultivation, especially since the beginning of the exile, and the wild beasts were even encroaching on the human settlements. A restoration to Canaan would be of little blessing to Israel if it were not to a Canaan where the conditions made security and prosperity assured. This is what Ezekiel anticipated as the gift of God; no doubt the intervention of God to attain this was, as we should say, supernaturally conceived; that is to say, God would do it—Ezekiel neither knew nor cared how, but his idea did not involve any marvellous

[1] 1 Kings xiii. 24 ff.

change in the constitution of the universe. Israel was once again to dwell in safety and prosperity in the land of promise.[1]

Like the days of blessing to which Ezekiel looks forward, the Day of judgment and visitation is not apocalyptically conceived. So far as Jerusalem is concerned, the judgment has come, to use our phrase, in the natural order.[2] Similarly with regard to the other nations involved. True, we get traces here and there of what might possibly be called apocalyptic imagery, but the meaning behind the imagery is plain. Ezekiel does not contemplate divine interpositions "out of the blue"; he believed that in this world, as we know it, pride comes before a fall and the divine righteousness is manifested in the fate of peoples and nations.

Thus in xxx. 10 the judgment upon Egypt is to take place "by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon"; in xxx. 18, 26 a captivity is threatened. In view of this it would be absurd to take the drying up of the rivers in xxx. 12a or the stirring of all Nature at the Pharaoh's fall as literally and prosaically intended. Again, in xxxii. 7 f. we get imagery which might be apocalyptic, but in the end the poet's meaning is clear; it is that Egypt will be overthrown by Babylon.[3] The apparently apocalyptic language is connected with the weird image of the vast crocodile, which represents the Pharaoh. It may be true that this image is ultimately derived from some old mythical tale, but in Ezekiel it is clearly but a symbol, and before the end of the poem or dirge the image is dropped, as in ver. 11, and the poet's literal meaning is unambiguously expressed.

[1] Cf. infra, pp. 236 f. [2] Chap. xiii. 5. [3] Ver. 11.

In Chap. xxxi we are given the image of the cedar, representing Pharaoh. If any should contend that mythological ideas underlie this chapter, this need not be denied; but Ezekiel's meaning is not obscure. In ver. 11 the imagery begins to break down and the literal meaning to appear, for trees cannot be "driven out" for their "wickedness." Then for a few verses the image is consistently followed, but in vers. 15–18 it becomes again mixed, for it is queer that trees should be represented as going down into Sheol, and still more queer that a tree should lie with "those who are slain by the sword" and "in the midst of the uncircumcised." [1] Of course, no one would maintain that the tree is meant literally, but in view of this it is surely more than hazardous to suppose that vers. 15 f. are intended to refer to some literal catastrophe in Nature which should accompany the overthrow of Egypt! If it is not plain enough from this passage that Ezekiel anticipates the overthrow of Egypt by Babylon, the instrument of the divine punishment, Chap. xxx with xxxii. 17 ff. should put the matter beyond doubt. Again, in xxix. 14–16 Egypt, it appears, is not to be finally destroyed, but simply punished and then reduced to what we should call "a third class power"; the world is to go on much as before, except that the haughty and proud nations will have been humbled.

Again, the doom predicted against Mount Seir is entirely similar in kind to the doom which had overtaken Jerusalem; there is no apocalyptic imagery at all in Chap. xxxv.

[1] Vers. 17 f. The confusion is so great that it would be natural to suggest that we see at work the hand of an editor; if this is so, it is noteworthy that the editor did not take Ezekiel's meaning here to be literal, but symbolical.

We come to the doom of Tyre in Chap. xxviii. Vers. 1–10 are plain enough. Whether "the prince of Tyre" is the actual ruler of Tyre as representative of the city, or whether he is a mythological figure like John Bull, there can be no doubt about the prophet's meaning: he is predicting the fall and destruction of the city. The precise exegesis of vers. 11–19 is exceedingly difficult. Ezekiel is obviously referring to mythological notions which would be intelligible to his audience, and clearly the general sense of vers. 11–19 is the same as that of vers. 1–10. The reference to a divine or semi-divine being who is expelled from the garden of God may refer to a story long familiar in Israel, or to one very recently learnt, or to one that would be obscure to all but the more educated in Israel; but just as it would be impossible to argue that the mythology of Milton, because known, was part of the current theology of the nineteenth century, so we are not at liberty to make any assumptions upon the basis of this obscure image to the faith and theology of Ezekiel and his contemporaries. What mythological stories Ezekiel may have believed, and in what sense he believed them, are questions which we cannot answer. Perfectly plain, however, is the general and entirely non-apocalyptic and non-mythological kind of doom which is foreseen by the poet for the city of Tyre.[1] This is further proved by Chaps. xxvi. f., where it is plain that the judgment on Tyre, like the judgment on Egypt, is to be by military disaster. Finally, we may observe that the judgments on Ammon, Moab, Edom and Philistia take the form

[1] Dr. Naish suggests that the prophet's interest in Tyre derives from the fact that Tyrian ships were needed for Hebrew missionary efforts. He doubts, however, the authenticity of this passage.

of such destruction as has actually come upon Judah.

It is fair and important to lay great stress upon the fact that the phrase "the Day of Adonai" is definitely applied by Ezekiel to the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of the people.[1] The Day of Adonai was a period. The first act was the judgment that went forth from the house of God in the ruin of Judea; the later acts were to be similar judgments upon Egypt and the neighbours of Israel in general. If occasionally metaphors are drawn from the realm of mythology, or even of apocalypse, it remains true that in Ezekiel also the Day of Adonai is not apocalyptically conceived.

But hitherto we have left unconsidered Chaps. xxxviii. f., the prophecy of Gog. Here at least we find ample *prima facie* justification for Bennett's remark that in Ezekiel we see "the beginnings of the transition from prophecy to apocalyptic."[2] "This passage," says Lofthouse, "is the first definite appearance in the Old Testament of what is known as 'apocalyptic.'"[3] These two chapters stand as a little booklet by themselves; it might fairly be said that they break the connection between Chaps. xxxvii and xl. The events of these two chapters are put off to an indefinite distance in the future. The destruction of Tyre and Egypt was expected to follow that of Israel and Judah as part of the same Day of Adonai; but these two chapters have apparently nothing to do with Ezekiel's doctrine of the Day. If the prophet had conceived himself to have an accurate knowledge of the future, he would hardly have left us here with

[1] Chap. xiii. 5.
[2] *Post-exilic Prophets*, p. 35.
[3] *Com.*, p. 276.

no hint of the redemption of Israel and the return to Palestine here presupposed; he would surely have said something of the reduction, if not the destruction, of the great kingdom of Babylon. Yet Babylon is excluded from the oracles of doom, and the Gog story presupposes that there exists in the neighbourhood of Israel no such great empire as the Babylonian. Is it likely that Ezekiel would have predicted the destruction of nations with which he was totally unfamiliar for a culmination of sins which bore no connection with the situation in his day? It seems clear enough that we have here another version (or perhaps, more accurately, two conflated other versions) of the expectation often expressed in the book of Isaiah, that all the nations of the earth would one day be gathered around Jerusalem to destroy it, and that they themselves should there be destroyed by the supernatural act of Adonai. In an earlier chapter reasons were given for supposing that this doctrine was not a development but a negation of Isaiah's teaching. What shall we say of the doctrine when we find it in Ezekiel?

Hans Schmidt, after pointing out that these pictures, whether found in Isaiah or Micah or Ezekiel, all bear a family likeness, like the mediæval pictures of the Madonna, finds in Ezekiel a certain difference which proves that his religious interest was fundamentally different from that of other great prophets.[1] These others, he thinks, had been concerned to show that Adonai was the Holy One who would make righteousness triumphant in the end, whereas Ezekiel was only concerned to show that Adonai's overwhelming might should be vindicated, and that His will, to which the

[1] See *S.A.T.*, II, ii, pp. 460 f.

categories of good and evil do not apply, should be fulfilled. The only absolute good, so it would seem, recognized in Adonai's will was relative to the cultus. For our present purpose we are only here concerned with the picture of Ezekiel's thought and message as derived, not without justice, from these two chapters. Can we say that we can recognize in it the Ezekiel whose work and teaching we have hitherto discussed? Ezekiel's doctrine of the Day is clear; it is in the line of the prophetic tradition as we have considered it; it is ethically conceived. The Gog story is plainly in the line of that expectation of the future which we have ascribed to those called "false prophets," and it has no ethical basis whatsoever; moreover, it is the sole section in Ezekiel which might reasonably be styled apocalyptic literature as opposed to prophetic. We cannot deny nor disprove the abstract possibility that there were two men in Ezekiel, but the Gog story must not be ascribed to Ezekiel *the prophet*. It is much more likely that Ezekiel, after the fashion of Isaiah, has suffered from an editor who accepted his doctrine that God's judgment would fall on the nations round about, but who missed his ethical principle and adduced the bizarre and perhaps ancient fantasy of the destruction of all nations at the gates of Jerusalem. The Gog story is entirely alien to the book of Ezekiel as a whole.

This judgment upon the Gog narrative is fortified by the last element in the teaching of Ezekiel to which we turn, the dispensation of Israel after the redemption.

We find in Ezekiel a certain Messianic doctrine. The Messiah, to use this later and perhaps misleading

term, is referred to in xvii. 22–4 as a "tender twig"; there is here no clear definition of the Messianic idea, but a reference to the fourth verse of the same chapter, where allusion is made to the capture of Jehoiachim, would seem to indicate that a human king is contemplated. In xxxiv. 23 f. the Messiah is called "David." On this Davidson wisely remarks: "The meaning cannot be that David would in person revive and reappear. It is more doubtful whether the prophet means that the line or family of David would again occupy the throne or that a single person would be king. It is possible that this question was not strictly before his mind; it is the character of the ruler that he thinks of. The Oriental mind hardly distinguishes between an ancient personage and one who appears in his power and spirit; when it compares it identifies." [1] In the last section of the book room is found for a prince (*nasi*), who might conceivably be called Messiah; his rôle is strictly limited to civil rule, together with an honorary status in the Church like that of *Fidei Defensor*. There has been much discussion as to the connection between this prince of the last section and the "tender twig" of earlier chapters, but it is to be observed that the sections about the prince are no part of Ezekiel's vision, and it is not likely that they come from him. We might, then, reasonably infer that Ezekiel looked forward to the restoration of a united monarchy under a king, probably of Davidic descent, who should reign in the spirit of David. There are in this picture no supernatural traits discernible. We have seen no good reason for supposing that Ezekiel anticipated a transformation of the land of Palestine into a

[1] *Com.*, p. 273.

miraculous heavenly world, but he was far from thinking that things would be just what they had been in his lifetime. The land would be inhabited by a new Israel of morally and spiritually converted people; therefore they would also be a prosperous people. Barrenness of flocks and herds, drought, mildew, locusts were regarded as the direct infliction of God. If the people were righteous, there would be no occasion for these judgments; the country therefore would know a new prosperity. Such an expectation may appear grotesque to those whose thoughts of Nature are derived from modern scientific textbooks, but at least this is no phantasy construction out of relation to moral principles, and it involves no world-order different from that which Ezekiel supposed himself to be experiencing now.

It is not infrequently urged that Ezekiel's outlook upon the future is narrowly and exclusively national, that he was in no sense a prophet of Israel's missionary vocation. It is tempting for us to speculate what would have been Ezekiel's answer to the question, what would be the religion of the rest of the world in the future age; but this was one of the questions with which, as a prophet, he does not seem to have felt himself called to deal. But it is fair that we should try to estimate what his religious position really involved. We have seen that he was not a ceremonialist, that is, one who was vastly concerned for the details of the ritual worship of Adonai. He accuses the neighbouring peoples of Tyre and Egypt of various sins, but not of failure to worship according to Hebrew rites. In the future age all the nations of the earth are to recognize the sovereignty of Adonai. This would certainly involve their keeping the moral

law as it had been revealed to them, and this would further involve the good pleasure of Adonai upon them. In such passages as xviii. 23, 31 ff. there is an implicit ethical and spiritual universalism which seems further indicated in the notion that Sodom as well as Samaria should be restored with Judah, and that the sin of Sodom was less than the sin of Jerusalem.[1] The implications of all this should be clear to us even if they are not worked out by the prophet himself.

In fine, I think we may conclude that Ezekiel has been greatly misunderstood, not only by modern exegetes, who have seen in him the sinister figure who nominally standing in the succession of the prophets was really the father and sponsor of that legalism which was the opposite of the prophetic faith, but also by the later Old Testament Church that edited him and preserved his writings in a manner that has given some excuse to the judgment of modern scholars. I believe that the ecstatic element in Ezekiel's prophecy and work has often been exaggerated; but nothing would seem further from the truth than that Ezekiel's sense of the nearness and power of God was as jejune and meagre as that which we ordinarily know. Ezekiel as a young man had seen the glory of the presence of Adonai; he knew in his heart that this glory must one day fill the earth; he predicted the utter overthrow of Judah because of apostasy and sin, but the glory of Adonai must be exhibited and mediated through a people. Therefore there must be a new Israel, and the prophet set himself to gather the nucleus of that new nation-church. The transition between the present age and the age

[1] Chap. xvi. 44 ff.

o come was not clear to him, but the spiritual rinciple was clear. God must give the people clean earts and a new spirit—yet this would not be the uerdon of the wicked, for they should be destroyed. hese promises, then, were absolute in themselves ut conditional to each member of the prophet's udience.[1] Israel is to dwell in the midst of the ations, walking in righteousness and truth, serving od in the appointed way, enjoying the divine favour, nd being "a light to lighten the Gentiles." We eed have no doubt but that Ezekiel is also among he prophets.

[1] Chap. xxxvi. 25–9.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Not many years since it was customary to depict the great prophets of Israel as preachers of a noble ethical monotheism and as brave and sagacious guides of their people in international affairs. But in more recent years stress has very justly been laid upon the thoroughgoing supernaturalism of the prophets. They were much more than preachers of righteousness; they were heralds of the Day, that "great and terrible Day of Adonai" which they declared to be imminent upon all peoples. They believed that all that happened in Nature or in history was of the direct working of the most high God. They had no belief in "evolution" as it is known and taught to-day, and their political ideas were not "practical," if judged by any standards that a *real* politician could admit. We have come to see that the old-fashioned picture of the prophets was not religious enough; it was too political, too tame, too purely ethical. But to-day in reaction we have taken the *ethical supernaturalism* of the true prophets for the *phantasy constructions* of the false prophets. We hardly venture to take them seriously; it is almost impossible for us to believe they really mean that which they seem to say; they must somehow be explained away. I do not mean for an instan

hat there is any conscious attempt by any reputable ld Testament scholar to soften or tone down the icture; that I do not believe. Our temptation is ore subtle than that. It is impossible altogether o eliminate the *a priori* element in interpretation. It easy to see, for example, that an age which is quite ersuaded of the impossibility of "miracle" is biased y a kind of reverence in the criticism of the Gospel arratives, for Christ must not be proved to be a iracle-monger. So the present generation as a whole as far too uncritically carried over into the sphere f religion ideas of evolution and development which ay have a real validity in the sphere of biology. loreover, the religion we live by (as opposed to the eligion we profess) is far too much a derivative of eism to enable us easily to enter into the ethical upernaturalism of the Hebrew prophets; hence we end unconsciously to explain away that which we annot understand. We do this by overstressing or xaggerating elements which in their place and due roportion are quite true.

I have insisted more than once that the psycho- gical conditions under which a prophet receives is message do not affect the message itself in respect f its truth. There is an important school to-day hich virtually represents the prophets as being eurotic by temperament and as exemplifying many f the recognized symptoms of hysteria. For the easons given in the first chapter I believe this to e a gross exaggeration. I have not denied that the rophets, together with many others of sane and alanced judgment, were sometimes subject to tactile r auditory hallucinations; I do not think it is possi- le or important to define the limits of their *furor*

poeticus or *furor propheticus*; but if we ourselves had anything of the prophet's sense of the nearness, the glory, the righteousness, the immeasurable holiness of the living God, we should, I think, be less disposed to think of their symptoms as neurotic. I do not feel free to think that their amazement and appalment was a sacred and picturesque disease. Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets!

Old Testament scholarship has gained enormously by the recent comparative method of the study of religion; in particular, the Old Testament has been greatly illuminated by the study of Egyptian and Mesopotamian religions. There have, indeed, been aberrations of learning which sought to show that almost all that seems most original in the religion of the Old Testament is derived from Egypt or from Mesopotamia; but the tendency even amongst more moderate scholars has been to obscure the prophets under heaps of "parallels." Especially is this true in the sphere of "eschatology." I have given reasons above for supposing that the current comparative eschatological school of Old Testament exegesis has proved in vital respects misleading for the understanding of the prophets. To put the matter briefly, according to the old-fashioned school the prophets were rationalistic; according to the modern school they were fantastic. I have tried to show that neither of these things is true. The prophets were far from being Deists, but they were realists proclaiming not their fantasies and desires with respect to the future, but the fundamental moral principles which, as they believed, underlie the actual world in which we live.

Embedded in the prophetic writings is a clear and

definite notion of religion—free, personal, ethical and dealing with realities. Are the closing verses of Amos authentic? Did Isaiah believe in the inviolability of Mount Zion and the imminence of the Messianic reign? Did Jeremiah confuse a spiritual repentance with a physical return from exile? Did Ezekiel set his heart upon the ritual of the new temple and gloat over the thought of the discomfiture of Gog? If so, it is religiously and philosophically certain that they did not understand their own real meaning, and that they halted between two different notions of religion. If my textual exegesis should be shown to be in error, and if, in fact, the prophets wandered amidst these lights and shadows, the Christian Church, observing the inconsistencies of the prophets, must make up its mind upon which side it stands, and the answer is beset with the gravest consequences. If that be the true notion of religion which I have interpreted as the message of the prophets, the Christian Church as a whole falls short of the religion of the great prophets only less than it falls short of the religion of Jesus Christ.

Many of my arguments, taken singly, are weak; but the cumulative effect of them, I think, is strong. In matters of such uncertainty and obscurity one of the strongest arguments for any position must always be that only upon the proposed hypothesis can sense be made of the religious history of Israel as a whole. It is naturally not possible, or rarely possible, to prove beginnings; but Elijah and Amos and their successors, claiming, as they seem to do, the authority of the Mosaic tradition, and making no claims to innovation, are like balloons that have drifted from their moorings and are, indeed, altogether

unintelligible in the succession of history, unless really the beginnings of the religion of Israel were along the lines which they supposed—unless, that is, Moses was in truth the prophet of the sovereignty and righteousness of Adonai and of His imageless, ethical and non-eschatological worship. Again, the inward and spiritual movements in post-exilic Judaism would seem unintelligible had the prophets not been the mediators of a free and personal religion.

Most surely it would be a day of refreshing and revival for the Christian Church if it should ever rediscover the great Hebrew prophets.

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